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ABSTRACT

This report presents a study of policy issues related to the provision of early childhood and family education services in Minnesota. Chapter One consists of an executive summary and recommendations. Chapters Two and Three overview the concept, rationale and implementation of Minnesota's early childhood and family education pilot programs. Chapters Four, Five and Six present perspectives on the pilot programs, including program evaluation, areas of agreement in providing service and administrative issues related to service provision. Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine discuss costs of the program. Legislation excerpts, a list of state level organizations and agencies, and a list of reports related to early childhood and family education are appended. (Author/RH)

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MINNESOTA COUNCIL ON QUALITY EDUCATION

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A POLICY STUDY OF ISSUES RELATED TO EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA

A Report to the Minnesota Legislature

January 15, 1979

PS011206

Minnesota Council on Quality Education
St. Paul, Minnesota

State Department of Education, 722 Capitol Square Bldg., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101; (612) 296-5072

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As chairperson of the Council on Quality Education, I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the important contributions of the many persons whose efforts are represented here. Persons on the Council and its Advisory Task Force on early childhood and family education expended considerable amounts of time, especially gathering points of view from other participants in the study.

Members of the Minnesota Legislature have correctly, we think, requested this review of issues and of the program. In particular, Representative Ken Nelson of Minneapolis initiated the suggestion. We are grateful for his insight in conceptualizing the idea for the study. The chairpersons of the education committees, Representative Carl Johnson of St. Peter, and Senator Jerome Hughes of Maplewood were also exceptionally helpful in this task. They made themselves accessible, and facilitated the involvement of other legislators.

The many other individuals who participated in the discussions, including staff persons with various State-level agencies and organizations and the local early childhood and family education programs, provided criticism and commentary of great importance in the study. Nonetheless, CQE and the Task Force bear full responsibility for any errors, or misinterpretations that have occurred here.

We wish also to recognize the work of Janice Colbert, who completed the enormous task of reviewing the literature, and Dr. Michael Patton, whose evaluations of the local programs have contributed heavily to their development, and this study.

Finally, CQE staff in the Department of Education invested long hours in authoring the extensive narrative which synthesizes the bulk of these deliberations into the actual report. These persons included Eugene Kairies, Coordinator for the Council; Karen Kurz, Assistant Coordinator; and Beth Sandell, Program Officer. Preparation of the final document and its typing required commitment beyond normal working hours, as well as skill and patience. For this, we thank Dianne Garcia and Tracee Blair.

B. J. Mahling, Chairperson
Council on Quality Education

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CHAPTER 1: AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE POLICY STUDY OF ISSUES RELATED TO EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION

Background of the Council on Quality Education

The Council on Quality Education was established by the Legislature when it passed the landmark 1971 School Aids Bill. The purpose was to provide a source of State funds to help local school districts try out innovative and cost-effective educational ideas. Since that time, and including fiscal 1979, the Council has provided more than 80 of these grants to local educational agencies in Minnesota.

The Council's membership is listed below, and is structured to include nine representatives appointed by the Governor -- one for each Congressional district, and a member at large; eight appointees of various educational organizations comprise the remainder of the members.

Dr. Kenneth Ames
St. Cloud
Representing: State University Board

Mr. Richard Anderson
St. Peter
Representing: Minnesota School Boards Association

Ms. Anna Barker
Cottage Grove
Governor's Appointee, 1st Congressional District

Ms. Nancy Belbas
Edina
Governor's Appointee, 3rd Congressional District

Ms. Darlene Herzog
Ivanhoe
Governor's Appointee, 6th Congressional District

Ms. B.J. Mahling (Chairperson)
Minneapolis
Governor's Appointee,Member-At-Large

Dr. Chandra Mehrotra
Duluth
Representing: Private College Council

Dr. Harris Miller
White Bear Lake
Representing: State Board for Community Colleges

Mr. Richard Moss
Long Prairie
Representing: Minnesota
Education Association

Ms. Jane Preston
White Bear Lake
Representing: State Advisory
Council for Vocational
Education

Ms. Loria Danage-Scott
Maplewood
Governor's Appointee, 4th
Congressional District

Ms. Joyce Storla
Fridley
Governor's Appointee, 5th
Congressional District

Ms. Loanne Thrane
Chanhassen
Representing: Regents of the
University of Minnesota

Mr. Gail Peterson
Minneapolis
Representing: Minnesota
Federation of Teachers

Ms. Judy Roy
Red Lake
Governor's Appointee, 7th
Congressional District

Mr. Cecil Smrstik
Ranier
Governor's Appointee, 8th
Congressional District

Ms. Janice Storms
Chaska
Governor's Appointee, 2nd
Congressional District

History of the Early Childhood and Family Education Legislation

Minnesota's early childhood and family education legislation was developed by Senator Jerome Hughes and initially passed in the 1974 Session. Administrative responsibility for implementing the program was directed at the Council on Quality Education (CQE), which has viewed the program as a "special" assignment complementing its role in improving education. As a requirement within the legislation, CQE was asked to appoint an Advisory Task Force to assist it in overseeing the program. Comprised of nine members, the Task Force has been structured to include parents, and to reflect representation from the fields of health, education, and welfare. Its membership is listed on the following page.

Ms. Selby Beeler
Rochester, Parent

Mr. Ted Bowman
Family and Children's Service
Minneapolis

Ms. Kathy Danford
Minneapolis, Parent

Ms. Phyllis Ellis
St. Louis Park, Parent

Ms. Erna Fishhaut
Center for Early Education
and Development, University
of Minnesota
Minneapolis

Dr. Pamm Mattick
College of Education, St. Cloud
State University
St. Cloud

Dr. Marjorie Oelerich
Mankato State University
Mankato

Dr. James Oggel
Women's and Children's Medical
Center
St. Cloud

Mr. David Olson
Goodhue County Social
Service Center
Red Wing

The initial appropriation for program grants was $250,000 for fiscal year 1975. The Council and Task Force reviewed 43 applications, out of which six were recommended to and approved by the State Board of Education for support during the 1974-75 year.

During the following legislative session, the appropriation was increased to $500,000 per year for the fiscal 1976-77 biennium. Subsequently, the Council and Task Force approved continuation grants for five of the original six programs (one was terminated), and new grants were approved for eight additional locations. At the end of fiscal year 1977, 13 programs were receiving early childhood and family education grants.

The appropriation for the fiscal 1978-79 biennium was increased to $854,000 per year. CQE was instructed to fund a minimum of 22 sites. Continuation grants were approved for the 13 existing programs in the spring of 1977, and proposals for new programs were reviewed that summer. By the following October, additional grants for nine new local programs had been approved for fiscal year 1978.

Continuation grants for fiscal year 1979 were approved by the Council and Task Force the following spring for all 22 sites. Of these, five programs have been funded in cities of the first class, eight are located in metropolitan suburbs, and nine are supported in school districts outside the seven-county metropolitan area.

Presently, Minnesota's early childhood and family education program is in its fifth year of "pilot" status. A critical moment in the history of the program will occur during the 1979 legislative session. At that time a decision will be made to determine whether the program should be expanded, concluded, or maintained at its present level. In part, this study of policy issues related to early childhood and family education is intended to assist in making that decision.

The Concept of Early Childhood and Family Education

Early childhood and family education education, as implemented in these grants, directly reflects the assumption that parents are their children's primary and most influential teachers. Therefore, the central goal is to enhance and support the competence of parents in providing a desirable environment for the healthy growth of their children.

The program has a strong base in research which shows that the years from birth to age six are crucial to all aspects of the child's development, and that families are the most significant influence on this process.

Because early childhood and family education focuses on strengthening the role of the parent, the local programs generally offer the following types of services: parent education group discussions; home visits; developmental activities for children; access to libraries of toys, books and parenting materials; distribution of newsletters with parenting information; and pre-parenting education for secondary students. In some cases, the local program provides early health screening for children younger than those served under other State legislation. In all instances, there is a strong emphasis on helping families obtain services available from other agencies. However, no program provides full-time child care or nursery school services under its own auspices.

To enhance the parent's role at home, most programs conduct an exemplary development class for children about once a week. Parents may participate in professionally designed activities here and spend part of the time in a discussion group with other parents of young children.

There is no income-related eligibility for participation. Services are available to all families having preschool age children, including infants and toddlers, residing in the area receiving the grant. The legislation suggests that this area be the attendance boundaries of one elementary school, although CQE can authorize a program to serve adjacent areas.

Each local program's operations are overseen by an advisory committee which must have a majority of participating parents. The committee is appointed by the local school board. It must report to the Council on Quality Education, the local school board, and the district's community school advisory council, if one exists.

The eligible applicants for early childhood and family education grants are local school districts. However, in 9 of the 22 sites, full or partial services are provided through contracting with private non-profit agencies in the community.

Nearly all (18) of the programs are receiving partial support for salaries of parent educators from funds allocated to Area Vocational-Technical Institutes for consumer home-making. Community education funds are providing additional support in six sites. Local districts provide direct or in-kind support for 14 of the programs, and CETA monies are being utilized in four locations. Other non-CQE funding includes special education reimbursements, Minnesota Child Care Facilities Act funds, fees and contributions from participants, as well as support from other local service agencies.

The Policy Study

The 1977 amendments to the program's legislation, in addition to expanding the number of local sites, requested that the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force conduct a study of policy issues involved with providing early childhood and family education in Minnesota. It was stipulated that the study be completed by January 15, 1979.

It was anticipated that the study would be closely related to the future of the program. Consequently, the Council and the Task Force established the following objectives for this effort:

(1) To provide a national perspective on the concept and the implementation of early childhood and family education;

(2) To highlight areas of agreement among major organizations in early childhood and family education at the State and national levels;

(3) To provide opportunity for a comprehensive review of concerns related to the delivery of early childhood and family education services at the State level;

(4) To provide evaluation information on the 22 pilot early childhood and family education programs to enable an assessment of their quality and potential impact; and

(5) To provide recommendations with accompanying rationale to the Legislature on the future of early childhood and family education in the State.

As a beginning point for the study, a major review of perspectives reflected both in the professional literature and in programs throughout the country was undertaken with the assistance of a contracted consultant. The review helped focus on issues -- points of disagreement, as well as serving to define areas in which there is agreement among organizations and researchers in the field. This helped to fulfill objective of the study.

Objectives two and three have been addressed by the Council and Task Force through the conduct of a series of meetings with organizations, agencies, and individuals having a critical role in and concern with early childhood and family education in Minnesota. This series of policy discussions has included:

- State legislators -- July 12, 1978
- Elementary principals of schools served by the 22 CQE-funded programs -- September 13, 1978
- Staff persons from the local early childhood and family education programs -- September 22, 1978
- Department of Education staff -- November 22, 1978
- State-level organizations and agencies concerned with early childhood and family education -- December 7, 1978

As appropriate for the respective groups, research data and other information related to early childhood and family education was overviewed. These presentations included a summary of a study (in preparation) by the U.S. General Accounting Office on the effectiveness of parent-focused programming designed for very young children and families. Dr. David Weikart overviewed research on the cost benefits and long-term impact on individuals of the High/Scope Program, located at Ypsilanti, Michigan. Dr. Michael Patton summarized findings from parent interviews and on-site observations for the CQE programs as compiled by the Minnesota Center for Social Research.

Discussion in the meetings subsequently focused on seven principal issues as outlined in the review of programs and the literature:

(a) Which agencies should administer and "sponsor" early childhood and family education programs?

(b) Which types of families should be served? Should the programs allow participation by all parents, or focus on "target" families?

(c) What should be the role of parents in the programs, both as participants, and in the advisory structure?

(d) Which qualifications are necessary for appropriate staffing of the programs?

(e) Are minimum standards necessary for facilities used for child development activities?

(f) Does organizing a program to serve the attendance area of an elementary school provide a viable structure for these services?

(g) Should early childhood and family education services be made available throughout the State and, if so, how should this occur?

Objective four of the policy study has been accomplished by summarizing evaluation reports for the Minnesota pilot sites in Chapter 4 of this report.

The data reviewed in that section include: parent responses in telephone surveys, analysis of cost and participation data from the local programs, and reviews at each pilot site by a team of independent observers on the extent to which selected quality criteria have been met.

To attain the fifth objective of the study, members of the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force have attempted to synthesize the information and viewpoints that have emerged in their work with the various agencies, organizations, and individuals, as well as from their direct experience with the pilot early childhood and family education programs. These are discussed in detail in other sections of this report and summarized in the remainder of this chapter.

POLICY ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS
A SUMMARY

RECOMMENDATION ONE: THE FUTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Council on Quality Education and the Advisory Task Force strongly recommend a gradual, controlled, expansion of early childhood and family education programming to all areas of the State. This expansion should be based on voluntary participation by local school districts and communities. During the fiscal 1980-81 biennium, the Council and Task Force recommend that the number of sites be increased from 22 to 40.

With respect to the implementation of this recommendation, the Council and Task Force suggest that all new programs be funded through a "negotiated grant" mechanism during their first few years, and until they have demonstrated the success of their services. During this period, new locations should also receive extensive backup assistance.

Established programs should receive funds through a formula related to their participation, and the amount of service they provide to parents and children. This formula needs substantial further development. The Council and Task Force recommend that alternatives for formula funding be utilized on an experimental basis during the next biennium, and that a statutory formula be adopted after that point.

DISCUSSION

Throughout this study, there has been strong recognition that Minnesota has developed an important concept. Having solid origins in research, the experience of the Council and the Task Force is that the concept is workable in a variety of settings.

Nonetheless, the members of these groups feel that the full range of options for deciding the future of the program should be considered. The Council and the Advisory Task Force have discussed various alternatives with a range of agencies, organizations, and individuals during the course of this study. The option receiving the strongest support is embodied in this recommendation: that early childhood and family education be implemented throughout the State through a long term phase-in process, based on voluntary participation by local school districts and communities.

This is the fifth year during which the pilot sites have been operating. The Council and Task Force feel there is a broad consensus that, provided the program is operated in general accord with the way this piloting has occurred, this is an appropriate point to adopt the policy posture that early childhood and family education services shall be made available throughout Minnesota.

A second option that received consideration was that of expanding the program to all school districts within the next biennium through mandating legislation. This option does not have the support of the Council and Task Force. In their experience with the program, they have found that implementing early childhood and family education requires a strong commitment and extremely delicate administration. The existing 22 programs have been able to establish high quality services. The Council and Task Force want to be confident that new programs will operate on a similar quality level and consider mandated Statewide implementation to be detrimental to that goal.

A third option for State action is to terminate the program. The Council and Task did not encounter any serious support for this option. While this study provided an opportunity to review a variety of concerns related to the administrative features of the program, there appears to be virtually unanimous support for its continuation in some form.

A final option for State consideration is to maintain the present commitment and support only the 22 local programs during the next biennium. In the opinion of the Council and Task Force, this would tend to place early childhood and family education in a nether land of interminable pilot status. This impression was reinforced throughout the policy discussions. Based on the evaluation findings about the programs, there appears to be little rationale for making early childhood and family education a permanent pilot program. This option should not be considered unless the recommendation of the Council and Task Force is clearly not feasible.

RECOMMENDATION TWO: PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP

Members of the Council and its Advisory Task Force recommend that early childhood and family education funds continue to flow to school districts, but that involvement of other agencies be strongly encouraged, as appropriate in the local community. While this can be accomplished either by adding language to statute or through further requirements in CQE's application procedures, the more effective approach may be the former. Consequently, the Council and Task Force recommend that local school districts be required to solicit and be receptive to the involvement of other agencies in the process of preparing a proposal for these funds.

DISCUSSION

The issue of which agencies should administer and "sponsor" early childhood and family education programs was highlighted in the review of the literature conducted for the Council and Task Force. It received considerable attention in the policy discussions conducted for this study.

In considering this issue with various discussants, note was taken of the fact that CQE funds can only be transmitted to a local school district under the present State legislation for the program. While other agencies have successfully participated as providers of services by contracting with school districts, operating virtually the entirety of the program at three sites, their involvement is presently an option for the local educational agency.

Throughout the policy discussions, there was a strong consensus on the need to ensure participation by non-school agencies in delivering services when appropriate to a particular local situation. There was disagreement as to whether the opportunity to make direct application should be confined to local school districts. Some of the participants in the discussions felt strongly that the mechanism of allowing participation by non-school agencies through contracting may be insufficient to encourage a reasonable amount of this involvement, and to prevent duplication of existing services by newly funded programs operated by schools.

One alternative to the existing pattern of making grants available only to school districts is to open submissions on a competitive basis to any qualified agency -- public or non-profit in nature. This was discussed. Arguments in its support included: an increased likelihood that services would be made available in communities where the local district is not interested in early childhood and family education; and a reduction in possibilities that new programs would duplicate or fail to coordinate with existing services.

Strong arguments were made against this alternative. First, difficulties were foreseen in establishing whether the potential breadth of non-school applicants would be sufficiently accountable for the use of public monies. Second, there was concern about maintaining open eligibility for participation by all parents, irrespective of income, since many existing agencies have traditionally provided services mainly for "target" families. Third, the view that the primary purpose of the CQE programs is educational in nature was brought out by other discussants. For the most part, these arguments emphasized retaining the provision that local school districts must apply for funds, but within a context of encouraging them to consider the option of contracting to provide services when other qualified agencies are available for these purposes.

RECOMMENDATION THREE: TYPES OF FAMILIES TO BE SERVED

The Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force recommend that open eligibility within the area served by an early childhood and family education program be maintained, along with retaining existing language in the legislation which requires that any locally established fees be waived if a family is unable to pay. Local programs should attain an approximately pro rata participation among the different types of families within their service areas with respect to employment, income, and ethnicity characteristics. The Council and Task Force recognize that this may require special efforts in "outreach" to low income and stressed families, along with vigorous efforts to obtain appropriately diverse staff and membership on the local program's parent advisory committee.

DISCUSSION

Participants in the policy discussions noted the unique nature of these programs when compared with other efforts to assist very young children and their families: they impose no income eligibility or other restrictions on participation. There was general agreement that the need for support in the parenting role is not related to a family's income, ethnicity, or level of education. Consequently, discussants were almost unanimous in their support for continuing this feature of Minnesota's early childhood and family education legislation.

An area of concern, however, was whether local programs could successfully obtain participation from a cross-section of the families in their service areas, including minorities, low-income persons, and single or working parents. Concommitantly, portions of the discussions noted that the local staff and the parent advisory committees must reflect the diversity of the population to be served. Discussants also recommended that CQE and the Task Force monitor programs' participation in terms of demographic characteristics more closely, and that a monopolizing of services by middle-income parents be prevented.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR: THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE PROGRAM'S ADVISORY STRUCTURE

The Council and the Advisory Task Force recommend that State-level guidelines be developed to assist communities in adapting the role of local parent advisory committees for early childhood and family education programs to meet their needs. These guidelines should enhance operation of the committees and address such matters as lines of communication and administrative control, involvement of staff and other professionals, and equitability of representation from the various groups of persons in the program's service area.

DISCUSSION

Throughout the literature on programming for young children, there is a deep concern about the role of parents, both as participants and in overseeing the design of services. Participants in the policy discussions reviewed the requirement in existing CQE legislation that each local program have an advisory committee composed of a majority of parents appointed by the school board for the district. In general, discussants felt this committee's function should concentrate on helping staff provide parent education services that are distinctively suited to the local clientele rather than in making administrative decisions. However, this was viewed more often as a matter of emphasis, not as an issue of selecting one function to the exclusion of the other.

Some participants in the discussions noted that the best-known model for parent involvement in program governance is Head Start, which has included an objective for raising the participants' social and economic status. Since the early childhood and family education programs funded by CQE are designed for a broader population, however, respondents generally felt that the advisory involvement of parents should be focused on the content of parent education offerings.

RECOMMENDATION FIVE: QUALIFICATIONS OF STAFF

The Council and Task Force recommend that local program staff be appropriately qualified through demonstrated competence in specified areas and/or appropriate licensure related to the job duties. State and local administration of early childhood and family education programs should continue efforts to provide in-service education for local staff, especially in the initial years during which programs are funded.

DISCUSSION

A major finding in the evaluation of Minnesota's early childhood and family education programs has been that the quality of staff is crucial to their successful implementation. On the issue of identifying specific qualifications, however, a variety of concerns were expressed in the policy discussions. First, the State Board of Teaching does not license parent educators, although licensure requirements have been adopted by the Division of Vocational-Technical Education in the Department of Education. Second, training uniquely suited to the needs of local administrators of early childhood and family education programs is not presently available. Third, while respondents agreed that the State licensure for professionals working with young children (nursery or pre-kindergarten) is critical to providing quality services, they also felt that allowances should be made for inclusion of paraprofessional staff without extensive academic credentials in this type of service. Fourth, while there is no overall shortage of persons with professional training in working with young children or parents, minorities may be severely underrepresented in this pool of available staff.

Most respondents felt that appropriate teaching licenses should be utilized for staffing professional positions, but that job descriptions ought to outline competencies that appear necessary for success in all job functions. Areas in which competencies could be identified include experience or training in child development, working with community groups, communications skills, adult learning methods, and health and safety. There was general agreement that these competency areas could also be used to select paraprofessional staff.

RECOMMENDATION SIX: MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PROGRAM FACILITIES

CQE and the Task Force recommend that the general health and safety standards of the Department of Public Welfare for licensing child care facilities be adopted as a requirement for operation of early childhood and family education programs. Guidelines should be developed for facilities used for parent education activities.

DISCUSSION

During the course of the policy discussions, it was noted that while school enrollments are declining, there has been a tendency to close unutilized buildings. This has created increased competition for the remaining space. It was pointed out that providing adequate facilities is especially critical for areas in which developmental activities for young children are conducted.

Participants noted that strict observation of high standards for these facilities could discourage school districts from applying for early childhood and family education funds. On the other hand, concern was expressed that a lack of standards would yield low quality programs. Some consideration was devoted to amending statute to allow districts applying for these funds to increase their mill levy to accommodate capital outlays for renovating facilities, but no formal recommendation resulted.

General agreement was reached that some minimal guidelines should be applied. Several respondents proposed adoption of the health and safety requirements for day care facilities utilized by the Department of Public Welfare. There was further accord that some guidelines should be developed for parent education facilities.

Some participants expressed concern that any planning for new or remodeled facilities take into account possibilities for multiple use of the space by other agencies in the community. It was also suggested that school districts not establish new facilities for children's activities which might duplicate appropriately equipped sites at existing community programs.

RECOMMENDATION SEVEN: PARTICIPATION THROUGH ELEMENTARY ATTENDANCE AREAS

The Council and Task Force recommend that additional local options in selecting the area to be served by an early childhood and family education program be accommodated, and that the emphasis on the elementary attendance area be decreased in this regard. Local district applications for funds should, however, be required to specify the service area and to describe the population that would receive services. Moreover, the area to be served should not be of such size as to offset the critically localized nature of these programs.

DISCUSSION

Minnesota's legislation is unique in the country in many respects. A particularly notable feature is that it suggests that programs be structured to serve persons residing within the attendance area of an elementary school. The Council on Quality Education is authorized to approve the request of a local program to serve more than one elementary attendance area. This discretionary authority was sought by CQE as an amendment to the original legislation when it became apparent that these boundaries are becoming increasingly unstable as a result of declining enrollments and growing desegregation efforts.

While the issue of focusing early childhood and family education services within elementary school attendance boundaries is not discussed in the national literature, the matter was considered in several of the policy meetings, and on a variety of other occasions by the Council and the Task Force. In these considerations, it was noted that the utilization of non-school agencies by local districts to provide program services appears to be somewhat hampered by the emphasis of the legislation on this service area. Other services in the community are seldom coordinated along these lines.

It was also noted that the concept of early childhood and family education has been developed with a strong thrust toward localism in the visibility of services to families. Consequently, an attempt to operate a single program to serve an entire city or large geographic region would offset many advantages.

Participants in the policy discussions suggested that the area to be served be a local option, but that boundaries not necessarily be linked with the elementary school attendance area. Virtually all the respondents agreed, however, that the service area must be defined by a district when it applies for funds.

RECOMMENDATION EIGHT: COLLECTING LONG-TERM DATA ON FAMILY IMPACT

The Council on Quality Education and the Advisory Task Force recommend that federal or foundation funds be sought to establish a data collection system to further document the long-term impact of early childhood and family education through a follow-up study of participating families and children. Data would particularly include information about the cost-effectiveness of the program. Establishment of this data collection effort should accompany ongoing evaluation of local programs which are in their first years of funding.

DISCUSSION

Minnesota's early childhood and family education programs have consistently been set apart from many other types of programming for young children and their families by their comparatively low average cost per participant. As data in other sections of this report indicate, the average annual cost per participant (counting both children and parents) was $139 during fiscal year 1978, including funds from all sources.

Based on research that has emerged in the field, early childhood and family education appears to have a strong potential to reduce costs for remedial and correctional programs for older children. There is a substantial body of evidence which suggests that many problems children have can be prevented by effective parenting in the early years. The Council and Advisory Task Force believe long-range data specific to the Minnesota programs will provide a basis for their future support and also be of value outside the State.

An Overview of the Report

This policy study includes eight additional chapters. While Chapter 1 is intended for summary purposes and broad distribution, the entire study is available on request.

Section I follows, and provides a detailed discussion of the concept and rationale for early childhood and family education in Chapter 2. A description of how the Minnesota pilot programs have been implemented appears in Chapter 3.

Section II provides a review of perspectives on early childhood and family education. Chapter 4 overviews evaluation findings compiled since the program began. Chapter 5 focuses on "areas of agreement" related to the provision of these services. Chapter 6 reviews discussions conducted during the course of the study in which issues -- areas of disagreement -- were explored.

Section III focuses on the cost of early childhood and family education. Chapter 7 reviews data on the participation of adults and children. Chapter 8 relates costs to participation data. Chapter 9 provides a consideration of the future financing and administration of the programs.

Section IV provides an extensive bibliography related to early childhood and family education. Section V, Appendices, includes a copy of the existing legislation for the program and other supporting materials.

SECTION I: MINNESOTA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION PILOT PROGRAMS

CHAPTER 2: THE CONCEPT AND RATIONALE

Introduction

Since the concept of early childhood and family education is relatively new, it is imperative that it be clearly defined. The purpose of this chapter is to provide that definition and to review the rationale for providing early childhood and family education.

The Concept of Early Childhood and Family Education

Early childhood and family education is designed for parents and their children aged birth to kindergarten enrollment. The programs are based on a recognition that the home is a child's first learning environment, and that the parent is the child's primary and most influential teacher. As a result, the central goal of early childhood and family education is to enhance and support the competence of parents in providing the best possible environment for the healthy growth of their children.

The programs have other major objectives, including: (1) engaging the interest and talents of parents in recognizing and meeting the emotional, intellectual, and physical needs of children; (2) promoting healthy self-concepts among family members; (3) sharing alternative child-rearing approaches with parents and offering them a chance to share skills, techniques, and ideas with each other; and (4) providing creative learning experiences for both parents and children.

Early childhood and family education programs focus on the parent, and thus do not attempt to provide child care or to duplicate services available through other agencies. Although the legislation allows local discretion in selecting program components, full-time day care or nursery school is not provided.

Assisting families in the use of available services in their respective communities is an emphasis of early childhood and family education programs. Even though fiscal resources are allocated through local school districts, they are responsible for serving as a catalyst to encourage cooperative efforts among other community services. Existing human and physical resources are to be used to prevent duplication. To that end, contracts and cooperative agreements between school districts and other local agencies are allowed and promoted (Hughes, 1978).

Parents and children are involved together in program activities. Typical involvement of a family is two hours a week for lengths of time ranging from four weeks to a school year. Most local programs are designed to offer parent education and child development sessions concurrently, beginning or ending with parent-child interaction times.

The intended participants are families of all income levels and ethnic backgrounds. Fathers, mothers, divorced persons, and single parents meet together to discuss concerns common to families of developing children. Program sessions are held during days, evenings, and weekends to accommodate working parents. If families are unable to attend center activities because of transportation problems or stressful situations, local staff may respond with regular home visits.

It is hoped that involving families in the years prior to kindergarten enrollment will encourage parents to continue to play an active role in the education of their children in the elementary grades and beyond. It is also believed that many learning and developmental problems may be prevented in the later school years. A comment from a kindergarten teacher quoted in the 1977 evaluation report on Minnesota's programs affirms the potential of these outcomes: "It's very easy to pick out children who have been in this program. . . parents participate now with understanding. They've learned how to interact with their children. It shows in them and their child." (Patton, 1977, p. 41)

Included in the services of early childhood and family education programs are opportunities for parent and family education through discussion groups and workshops, and education of the individual child and parent in the home. Offerings for children at program centers include supervised play and learning activities, as well as early health screening and investigation of potential barriers to learning. Easy access to toys, books, and other learning materials for parents and children is provided by many programs. Opportunities for adolescents to explore both child development and the responsibilities of being a parent are frequently offered. Since each local program is designed to meet community needs and interests, services supplied by individual programs may vary to match those needs.

In summary, parents are the primary consumers of early childhood and family education services. Their comments about why they became involved in the programs and their assessments of program strengths serve as the best illustration of the program concept. Interviews with 130 participating parents in 1977 have been condensed as follows:

> Parents emphasized the importance of sharing views with other parents; establishment of mutual support groups; learning about child development and parenting skills; providing social interaction and stimulation for their child; integrating the child into the school; and having access to toys, books, new ideas and health screening. (Patton, 1977, p. 48)

Rationale for Early Childhood and Family Education

A question commonly heard by members and staff of the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force is phrased: "But why are we spending money on programs to help parents raise kids? They seem to have done a good enough job in the past. Besides, parenting is instinctive." Yet a look at actual family statistics across the country, writings of such well-known social scientists as Margaret Mead and Urie Bronfenbrenner, and other articles in the public and professional media, indicates that today's families may be under increased stress and in need of support and assistance.

As described earlier in this chapter, early childhood and family education programs are designed to provide support and assistance to parents of children aged birth to kindergarten enrollment. This portion of the chapter will discuss the rationale for these services. Discussion of the fundamental reasons for providing early childhood and family education includes the following points: (1) recent evidence of increased pressures on American families, (2) research on the critical role of parents in children's early years, (3) research support for effectiveness of parent-focused early childhood programs, (4) examples of related efforts in other states, and (5) reactions of parents to early childhood and family education programs.

Recent Evidence of Increasing Pressures on American Families

Webster's Dictionary defines the word "family" as a social unit consisting of parents and the children that they rear. Since 98 percent of American children grow up in families now and are likely to do so in the future (Keniston, 1977), it is obvious that families are critical influences on the kind of adults children become. With heightened attention being focused on the large amounts of taxpayer dollars going to welfare, corrections, and related social service costs, many observers are citing the problems of families as a major contributing factor.

Studies on the state of families across the country have produced the following national statistics:

1. Thirteen percent of married women with preschool children worked outside their home in 1948, compared with 37 percent in 1976. This trend is expected to increase.
2. In 1975, the husband was the sole breadwinner in only 34 out of every 100 husband-wife families.
3. There has been 100 percent increase in the number of children affected by divorce since the turn of the century. Currently, 40 percent of marriages end in divorce, 80 percent of teenage marriages end in divorce within five years, and many divorced mothers do not remarry. Approximately four out of every 10 children born in the 1970's will spend part of their childhood in a one-parent family, usually with the mother.
4. The number of births to unmarried mothers is growing. In 1960, five percent of births were outside of marriage, compared with 12 percent in 1976.
5. For each one million teenage pregnancies, 300,000 are born to unwed mothers and 300,000 of the mothers enter forced and unstable marriages.
6. In 1910, 40 percent of the American population lived in an urban setting, compared to 76 percent in 1976.
7. There has been a dramatic decline in the percentage of extended families (i.e., two parents, children, and at least one other relative). One study revealed, for example, that 50 percent of

the households in a major Eastern city had extended families in 1900, compared with four percent in 1970.

8. The average family moves 14 times. Twenty percent of the American population moves each year.

9. By the age of 16, the average child has spent more time watching television than in school.

10. One million youths run away from home each year.

11. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for youths 15 to 24 years of age.

12. Five percent of American teenagers have an alcohol drinking problem.

13. One-fourth to one-third of all American children are born into families with financial straits so great that the children will face basic deprivation.

14. Approximately 3.7 million children under six are considered to be at "high risk". An additional 2.2 million children are considered "at risk" based on income levels of their parents.

15. Compared to 41 other industrialized countries, the United States has the 16th highest infant mortality rate.

16. Family disorganization has been identified as the most significant antecedent of behavior disorders and social pathology, such as suicide, dropouts, drug abuse, and vandalism.

(Advisory Committee on Child Development, 1976; Bronfenbrenner, 1974a; Califano, 1974; Carnes and Himelrick, 1976; Hobbs, 1975; Keniston, 1977; and Meier, 1976)

Economic factors must also be considered a strain not only on poor families, but also on the middle class. A recent study by the Commission on Population Growth and the American Future determined that the minimal cost of raising one child in the United States to age 18 is $34,464. If one adds a college education and an estimate of wages lost to the mother by caring for the child instead of earning an income, the figure jumps to $98,361. In earlier years, families were economic units where all members played productive roles in household functioning. Now, work and family life are separate enterprises, and children may be viewed as an economic liability rather than an asset (Kantor, 1977; Keniston, 1977).

To bring the impact of these facts closer to home, the following statistics are drawn from a survey of Minnesota households, conducted in April, 1977 (Minnesota State Planning Agency, 1978, p. 7):

1. The so-called "typical" family of four--that is, an employed husband, a wife who does not work outside the home and two children under 18--comprised only six percent of all Minnesota families in 1977.
2. The proportion of children under 18 years living with one parent rose to 10 percent in Minnesota. In the Twin Cities metropolitan area, the proportion of children living with one parent is 15 percent, close to the national average of 16 percent. The comparable proportion is six percent in the balance of Minnesota.
3. Single-parent families account for 10 percent of the 558,000 Minnesota families with children under the age of 18. Ninety percent of these single-parent families are headed by women.
4. The 1977 median income of female-headed families is $8,050. This figure is only 52 percent of the median income of husband-wife families, which is $15,560.
5. The unemployment rate of women who head families is three times that of husbands who head families.
6. Fifty-two percent of the wives in husband-wife families are in the labor force.

From the information provided from national and Minnesota surveys, it seems clear that profound changes are taking place in the lives of America's children. The institution which is at the center of these changes and that itself shows the most rapid and radical transformation is the American family, the major context in which a child grows up (Bronfenbrenner, 1974b).

Research on the Critical Role of Parents in the Early Years

There is substantial agreement among contemporary child development researchers on the importance of the early years of a child's life. The literature points out that the first four years are a critical period in a child's development, especially in the areas of language, curiosity, social skills, and the roots of intelligence. At no other time will a child develop so rapidly as during those first four years.

Although research suggests that some traits are biologically determined, such as temperament and activity level, it is becoming increasingly clear that many childhood characteristics are partially or predominately shaped by the people, objects, and events in a child's environment.

A large number of studies have focused on differences in the abilities of parents to teach children effectively (e.g., Baumrind, 1967; Bayley and Schaefer, 1969; Bee et al., 1969; Brophy, 1979; Hess et al., 1968; Marans and Lourie, 1967; Slaughter, 1968; Steissguth and Bee, 1972). These studies have identified parental teaching styles, language interactions, and expectations that contribute to and detract from producing what Caldwell (1967) terms the "optimal learning environment." Children who exhibit effective learning styles in school have parents who interact with them in intellectually stimulating activities, encourage independence and respect, and express competence in raising them (Swan and Stavros, 1973; Watts et al., 1973). Additionally, children's early personality development is enhanced through their involvement in reciprocal interaction with caregivers with whom a mutual and enduring emotional attachment has been established (Bronfenbrenner, 1968b, 1972a).

Hess (1969) has delineated components of parental behavior positively related to the child's intellectual development and academic achievement as follows: (1) intellectual relationship with the child -- demand for high achievement, maximum verbal interaction, involvement with and attentiveness to children, and maternal teaching behavior; (2) emotional relationship -- warm, affectionate interactions with child and feelings of high regard for child and self; and (3) interaction pattern -- pressure for independence and self-reliance, setting high standards and enforcing rules, and use of conceptual rather than arbitrary discipline.

The major characteristics of children's interactions with parents support the view that parents are teachers of their children. Furthermore, they raise the credibility of findings concerning the importance of parental influence on child development. As Schaefer (1972) has indicated, comparing the characteristics of parent-child interactions with characteristics of children's interactions with child care and early education personnel, suggests that strengthening and supporting family care and education of children should be the major focus in child development programs. Additional support for the need for early childhood programs to address processes in the parent-child relationship is found in research demonstrating the reciprocal influence of both the mother and the infant in shaping each other's behavior (Moss, 1967; Bell, 1968; Rheingold, 1969).

Since parents are so critical in the early years in influencing the development of children, educators and psychologists contend that it is vital that early childhood programs be designed to assist the parent in his/her role as the primary educator of the child. As Ainsworth (1975) and others have stated, an improvement of environmental conditions through parent education is assumed to help parents continue to provide an upgraded enviornment for their children, long after they have participated in such an intervention program.

Research Support for Effectiveness of Parent-Focused Early Childhood Programs

Traditionally, early childhood education programs have focused on providing stimulating experiences for children within a center environment. The programs have tended to be child-oriented and involve parents to a minimal degree. Generally, evaluation of child-centered intervention programs has identified immediate gains in IQ scores and other related measures, followed by significant declines. In some cases, by the third year after leaving the programs, children have fallen behind their peers. The results of several studies indicate that intervention programs that work only with children frequently fail to produce lasting effects (Biber, 1970).

Based on these considerations, it might be expected that early childhood programs serving parents as well as children would tend to be more effective than programs centering exclusively or primarily on the child. Research on parent education programs designed to enhance parental skills upholds this expectation. Family-focused early intervention programs have demonstrated moderate to high IQ, language development, and achievement gains in children. It has repeatedly been found that the greater the degree of parent involvement, the more long-lasting the effects (White et al., 1973).

In an intensive review of nine parent-child intervention studies, Bronfenbrenner (1974c) summarized the results as follows:

1. Parent-child intervention resulted in substantial gains in IQ which were still evident three to four years after termination of the program (Gordon, 1972, 1973; Levenstein, 1972).

2. The effects were cumulative from year to year, both during intervention (Levenstein, 1972) and, in some instances, after the program had ended (Gordon, 1973; Levenstein, 1972).

3. The magnitude of IQ gain was inversely related to the age at which the child entered the program, the greatest gains being made by children enrolled as one-and two-year-olds (Gilmer et al., 1970; Gordon, 1972, 1973; Karnes et al., 1968, 1969a, 1969b, 1970; Radin, 1969, 1972; Stanford Research Institute 1971a, 1971b).

4. Parent intervention was of benefit not only for the target child, but also for his younger siblings (Gilmer et al., 1970; Klaus and Gray, 1968).

5. Gains from parent intervention during the preschool years were reduced to the extent that primary responsibility for the child's development was assumed by staff members rather than left with the parent, particularly when the child was simultaneously enrolled in a group intervention program (Gilmer et al., 1970; Karnes et al., 1969c).

6. By the time the child was five years old, parent intervention appeared to have little effect so far as gains in intellectual development. But children who were involved in an intensive parent intervention program during, and, a especially, prior to their enrollment in preschool or school, achieved greater and more enduring gains in the group program (Gilmer et al., 1970; Gordon, 1972, 1973; Radin, 1969, 1972; Stanford Research Institue, 1971a, 1971b; Smith, 1968).

7. Parent intervention influenced the attitudes and behavior of the mother, not only toward the child, but in relation to her view of herself as a competent person capable of improving her own situation (Gilmer et al., 1970; Gordon, 1973; Karnes et al., 1970).

8. Families willing to become involved in parent intervention programs tended to come from the upper levels of the disadvantaged population.

9. Along with advantages, parent intervention appears to have some limitations in terms of its applicability and effectiveness with families at the lowest extreme of income levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1974).

10. In the early years of life, the key element was the involvement of parent and child in verbal interaction around an intellectually challenging task. A second critical feature was the fact that the mother not only trained the child but the child also trained the mother. A third factor was the existence of a mutual and enduring emotional attachment between the child and adult (Bronfenbrenner, 1968a, 1968b, 1972a).

11. Finally, no differences in the child's intellectual gains have been related to whether the parent educator is a professional teacher, social worker, or paraprofessional (White et al,, 1973).

Recent reviews of 28 parent-centered education programs for young children (Goodson and Hess, 1975a; Hess, 1976) have reaffirmed and extended Bronfenbrenner's 1974 findings. Twenty-five of the programs produced significant IQ gains. Three programs assessing school social behavior found teachers rated program children higher than control children. Positive effects were also noted for parents after the program terminated, such as a greater sense of personal control over their lives, more flexible attitudes toward their children, and more supportive and varied verbal and nonverbal behaviors. In those few programs assessing changes in the home environment, it was found siblings benefited by IQ gains. Longitudinal testing in eight programs found seven reported significant IQ gains which persisted into the elementary school years. Generally, program children were more likely to maintain grade level performance and less likely to require special classes than control children. Greater changes were noted in programs with a home visit component, either alone or in combination with preschool.

Evaluations of federally-funded Parent-Child Development Centers (a variation of Head Start), focusing on the mother-child system have produced similar results (Love, 1976; Meier, 1976). According to John Meier, former director of the Office of Child Development, "Large-scale Parent-Child Development Centers established as national experiments have clearly demonstrated the value of parental training in the first years of life--followed by preschool group experiences in which parents and child continue to work closely together. Highly significant results have been obtained not only for disadvantaged black families but also for middle-class white families, Spanish-speaking Mexican Americans, and other ethnic groups." (1976, p. 14)

Longitudinal follow-up studies of 12 preschool intervention programs have been conducted by a consortium of early childhood scientists studying children in center-based programs, home-based programs, and combination programs, up to 10 years after completing the program. A preliminary analysis of the findings has revealed significant differences in the percentage of program children in special education classes or held back a grade when compared to controls. Four out of five studies emcompassing data on special education enrollments showed between 50 and 90 percent fewer placements among children who had received preschool education. Five of seven studies also indicated that significantly fewer program children had repeated one or more grades, compared to children who did not participate in preschool intervention programs. (Lazar et al., 1977; Report on Education Research, 1977)

The cost-effectiveness potential of early intervention programs was explored by Weikart, a member of the consortium described above. He directed a cost-benefit analysis of the Perry Preschool Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan. The study found that the money schools saved by not providing special education or more than 12 years of education to program children substantially exceeded the preschool training costs. Preliminary findings also indicate that program children had higher projected life-time earnings than students who did not have preschool education. (Weber, Foster, and Weikart, 1978) Possibilities for reduced remedial expenditures are also touched upon in a recent national study on early childhood and family development programs by the United States General Accounting Office, scheduled for release in February, 1979.

The research and evaluation studies discussed in this portion of the chapter lend strong credence to the potential of parent-focused early childhood programs to prevent educational problems from emerging in the elementary school years. The cost-effective nature of early intervention programs is also suggested in studies demonstrating reduced spending on special education services in the elementary school grades for program children as compared to children who have not participated in preschool services. The critical variables in program effectiveness have been identified as a high level of parent involvement and program support for parents as the most important adults in the lives of young children.

Examples of Related Efforts in Other States

To ensure that this policy study was not performed without the benefit of knowledge of educational programs and services for families and children provided in other states, the Council and its Advisory Task Force contracted with a consultant to perform a review of these efforts. A comprehensive summary of parent and early childhood education programs provided by the federal government and various funding sources in other states was prepared by Janice Colbert and is available on request from the Council on Quality Education office (Colbert, 1977).

The report describes several variations on Head Start, originally established in the 1960's as primarily a preschool education program for low income four-year-olds, with additional social services provided for their families. These variations, approximately 60 in number, focus more centrally on parents and include Home Start, Child and Family Resource Programs, Parent and Child Centers, and Parent and Child Development Centers.

An example of a locally funded early childhood and family education program in another state similar to the Minnesota pilots, is the Brookline Early Education Project (BEEP). Sponsored by the Brookline (Massachusetts) Public Schools and offered in conjunction with Children's Hospital Medical Center, BEEP provides extensive diagnostic and educational services for families of children aged birth to kindergarten enrollment. Families who live in the area are eligible regardless of income level.

Other school-related programs in the country include: the Parent-Child Early Education Program in St. Louis County, Missouri; the Parent and Child Education Project in Tucson, Arizona; the Parent Education and Preschool Program with Added Dimensions in Jefferson County, Colorado; and a center- and home-based program for parents in Salt Lake City, Utah.

There are further examples of increasing national focus on early childhood and family education programs. In 1978, Congress passed an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title IV-C. The amendment was sponsored by then Representative Albert Quie and adds early childhood and family education programs to the list of activities appropriate for use of these funds. Finally, parent education is recommended as a primary prevention attack on the serious national problem of child abuse and neglect (Education Commission of the States, 1976).

This review of related efforts in other areas of the country establishes the significance of the Minnesota early childhood and family education programs. Despite a variety of services designed for young children provided in other localities, a major state-funded attempt to support and enhance the role of parents of all income levels has not been enacted elsewhere. Preliminary information from the U.S. General Accounting Office's ongoing national study of early childhood and family development programs shows that the Minnesota pilots constitute the most significant state effort in this program area to date (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1979).

The inadequate nature of government appropriations for very young children and their parents was concisely stated by Bettye Caldwell, a prominent early childhood professional, in testimony before the United States Senate in 1975: "At present our services to children and families are too few, too inaccessible to those who need them most and all too often, available too late, to be of maximum help."

Reactions of Parents to Early Childhood and Family Education Programs

A detailed summary of telephone surveys conducted in 1976, 1977, and 1978 with parents who had participated in Minnesota's early childhood and family education programs is provided in Chapter 4 of this report. This information suggests substantial parent support for early childhood and family education.

In 1978, 220 parents were asked the following question: "There are many demands made on legislators to fund a variety of different educational programs. Given the problems in funding all education programs these days, how important should funding for early childhood and family education programs be?" Ninety-five percent of the parents responded that funding for the programs should be given either "top priority" or an "important" priority. That same year, 91 percent of parents interviewed reported that they had been helped either "a great deal" or "somewhat" in the performance of their parenting role since beginning participation in the programs. (Patton, 1978)

There appears to be a high level of interest in early childhood and family education services on the part of parents in other states. For example, a brief article on Minnesota's pilot programs published in the August, 1978 issue of McCall's magazine resulted in over 800 letters of inquiry to the Council on Quality Education from across the United States and Canada within five months. The majority of letter writers applauded the Minnesota effort and requested information on the location of similar programs in their local areas. The other common request was for titles of books and other sources for parents to consult for help in child rearing. This high interest seems to indicate a need felt by adults for support and assistance with their parenting role.

Summary Comments

This chapter began by providing a working definition of the concept of early childhood and family education. The definition emphasized the family focus of the programs. Based on the recognition that the parent is the child's first and most important teacher, the central goal of early childhood and family education is to enhance and support the competence of parents in providing for the healthy growth of their children during the important years before school enrollment.

The second portion of the chapter provided a rationale for the provision of early childhood and family education. It included information from the following perspectives: recent evidence of increasing pressures on American families; research on the critical role of parents in children's early years; research support for the effectiveness of parent-centered early childhood programs; examples of related efforts in other states; and reactions of parents to early childhood and family education programs.

Statistics describing the radical transformation of the "typical" American family suggest there is a need for services to support families of young children. The so-called "typical" family of four--that is, an employed husband, a wife who does not work outside the home, and two children under 18--comprised only six percent of all Minnesota families in 1977 (Minnesota State Planning Agency, 1978).

Additionally, it is not only low income parents who need and seek help in raising their children. A study of college-educated, middle class parents who planned for their first child, revealed a disenchantment with the parental role after the birth of that child. Eighty-three percent of these parents indicated that they experienced "severe crisis" in adjusting to the effects of the new child on their lives. They also stated that their school experiences had not at all prepared them to be parents. (Le Masters, 1968)

There is substantial agreement among contemporary child development professionals on the importance of the first four years of a child's life and the critical role played by the family during those years. The literature points out that at no other time will a child develop so rapidly as during the first four years. This has led educators and psychologists to the contention that it is vital that early childhood programs be designed to assist the parent in his/her role as the primary educator of the child.

Research and evaluation studies on the effectiveness of parent-focused early childhood education lend strong support to the potential of these programs to prevent educational problems from emerging in the elementary school years. The cost-effective nature of early intervention programs is also suggested in studies demonstrating reduced spending on special education services in elementary school for program children as compared to children who have not participated in preschool activities.

A survey of parent/early childhood efforts in other states (Colbert, 1977) indicates that there are an increasing number of programs being provided through a variety of funding sources. Despite this fact, services to families of young children remain fragmented and comprise an extremely low percentage of federal and state spending on education. A national study on early childhood and family development programs to be released in February of 1979 cites the Minnesota pilots as the most significant state effort in this program area to date (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1979).

Reactions of participating parents to the Minnesota early childhood and family education programs indicate a high level of satisfaction and support for the services. In a 1978 survey, 95 percent of 220 parents interviewed stated that funding for these programs should be given either "top priority" or an "important" priority by the Minnesota Legislature.

It seems clear that there are strong fundamental reasons fot the provision of early childhood and family education programs to parents and children prior to school enrollment. The following statement is excerpted from a report on a study of American children and families commissioned by the Carnegie Corporation of New York:

> We believe that families should have access to services without stigma or barriers based on race or class. We also believe that services should be provided as an integrated network, so that instead of isolated programs for children, we have coordinated national and local systems to support families, giving them maximum choice of which services will best strengthen their ability to cope with the problems of living. Parents should participate in planning and running services; services should make full use of parents and others as paraprofessionals and volunteers. Finally. . . we believe this country is currently spending a great deal of money on repair rather than prevention. This emphasis should be reversed and every measure taken to save families before they reach the breaking point. (Keniston, 1977, p. 136)

CHAPTER 3: THE IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The rationale for early childhood and family education is soundly based on research in the professional literature on child development and the family's role in that process, as described in Chapter 2. Drawing upon this research, Senator Jerome Hughes played a highly significant role in developing an operating concept for early childhood and family education in Minnesota when he authored the 1974 enabling legislation for the program.

The State funding commitment to early childhood and family education has grown from that first annual appropriation of $250,000, under which six pilot programs were funded, to the present annual appropriation of $854,000, which has funded 22 programs during the fiscal 1978-79 biennium. Of these 22 currently funded programs, five are located in cities of the first class, eight in metropolitan suburbs, and nine outside the seven-county metropolitan area.

This chapter discusses implementation of this concept of early childhood and family education in Minnesota.

Funding Process for Early Childhood and Family Education Programs

The legislation states that the Council on Quality Education (CQE) shall specify the form and manner of application and determine the participating pilot programs (Laws of Minnesota, 1977: Chapter 447; see Appendix A). Since 1974, local programs have received funds through negotiated grants. Proposals have been widely solicited from individuals and public and private agencies across Minnesota. They are submitted through local school districts, which by law must act as fiscal agents for the programs. The proposals specify the services to be provided and the estimated budget for delivery of those services. Technical assistance to proposal writers is provided by Council on Quality Education staff through workshops and individual consultation.

Each proposal is competitively reviewed by members of the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force on early childhood and family education. Following this process, which is culminated by interviews with authors of proposals under final consideration, precise grant amounts are individually negotiated with local program staff. The State Board of Education provides final approval for all funded grants. (For detailed description of the funding process, see Chapter 9.)

Grant applications must be resubmitted annually for continuing programs. There is no time limit on the provision of funding support, and no requirement that local school districts ultimately assume fiscal responsibility for early childhood and family education programs. Although local contributions are welcomed, no matching funds are required.

Coordination with Community Services and Other Funding Sources

The Council on Quality Education encourages local school districts to be receptive to the involvement of other agencies, both public and private, during the proposal writing process. The legislation states: "In the determination of pilot programs, programs shall be given preference for their ability to coordinate their services with existing programs and other governmental agencies." (Laws of Minnesota, 1977: Chapter 447)

Furthermore, the local school district may choose to contract with another public or private agency for the provision of full or partial services in the pilot programs. This method of providing services is being used in nine of the 22 programs, six of which provide staff for parent and family education or child development sessions. The remaining three contracts supply early health screening for children under the age of three.

In addition to the CQE grant, many of the early childhood and family education programs have obtained supplementary funds from other sources. Currently, 18 of the 22 programs receive partial support for parent education salaries from funds allocated to Area Vocational-Technical Institutes for consumer homemaking. Six programs are obtaining funds from local community education programs. School districts have provided some financing or "in-kind" contributions of space and administrative services for 14 of the programs. Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) monies pay salaries of specific staff members in four programs. Other non-CQE fiscal support includes funds from special education reimbursements, Minnesota Child Care Facilities Act, Head Start, and other local service agencies.

Although the legislation allows local programs to charge reasonable fees for services, these fees must be waived if parents or caregivers are unable to pay. At the present time, most local early childhood and family education programs offer services free of charge.

Service Components Offered

The general purpose of early childhood and family education programs as stated in the legislation, is shown below:

> Early childhood and family education programs are programs for children before kindergarten and below age six which may include the following: identification of potential barriers to learning, education of parents on child development, libraries of educational materials, family services, education for parenthood programs in secondary schools, in-center activity, home-based programs, and referral services. (Laws of Minnesota, 1977: Chapter 447)

The specific services offered by a program are a matter of local choice, providing flexibility in matching their activities with the needs of their communities. Local experimentation with innovative service delivery methods has been encouraged by the Council on Quality Education, which has felt this is consistent with the pilot character of the legislation. In turn, variations in programming among the 22 sites have resulted.

Certain services, however, have become widely characteristic of the programs. Those most commonly provided are described below.

1. Center-based Parent and Family Education offers information on child development and opportunities for parents to share alternative child-rearing styles. Activities include formal and informal small group discussions, guest lectures, workshops, field trips, observation of and participation in learning experiences for children, and referrals to other community agencies on request.

2. Home-based Parent and Family Education services offer educational assistance to families living in isolated circumstances. Local staff visit homes on a regular basis, bringing program activities to parents and children.

3. Center-based Child Development Activities are provided in an environment carefully planned to meet the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of young children. Sessions are usually conducted on a weekly basis and last from one to three hours. Activities are offered for mixed age groups or separately for infants, toddlers, and prekindergarten children, and are typically held concurrently with center-based parent education sessions.

4. Early Health Screening helps to detect potential learning problems or deterrents to a child's healthy growth and development. With passage of statewide screening legislation, the programs closely coordinate health screening services with their local school district efforts.

5. Resource Libraries broaden the scope of information available to parents by providing opportunities to freely and conveniently borrow materials such as durable and developmentally appropriate children's toys, publications for parents, children's books, and other materials related to family education.

6. Preparenting Education for Adolescents is designed to raise awareness of the responsibilities and rewards of being a parent. High school or junior high students may serve as aides in child development activities which promote interaction with young children and provide opportunities for instruction in child development. The students occasionally participate in parent discussion groups. Programs may also offer workshops for students in area junior or senior high schools.

Since early childhood and family education focuses on the parent, full-time day care or nursery school is not provided.

The Council and its Advisory Task Force have found that local programs consistently require a "start-up" period. It takes time and extensive staff effort to establish the program's credibility and gain participation. Programs may significantly change their format during this process. For example, between the first and second years of operation, one local program dropped center-based services almost completely. It now operates a successful program that is primarily home-based. Additionally, local programs have found it necessary to schedule events on evenings and weekends, as well as days, to accommodate eligible parents.

The following descriptions of three currently operating early childhood and family education programs provide illustrations of local variation in service delivery patterns.

BACKUS: "Early Childhood Development Program"

Funded through the Backus Public Schools, this program operates through a contract with Sandy's School for Little People, a private non-profit nursery school. For its rural area, the program provides parent education primarily through visits by a home/school coordinator. It also coordinates early health screening for area children under the age of three. Parents and children gather informally at the program center, located in a remodeled storefront in the business area of Backus. Loans of toys, equipment, and reading materials are offered to help parents establish a stimulating home environment for their children.

BLOOMINGTON: "Parent and Child: Growing Two-gether"

Operated directly by the Bloomington Public Schools, this program is located in Valley View Elementary School. It provides a broad range of center-based education for married and single parents, with scheduling to accommodate working persons. Child development sessions are offered for children from birth to age five in conjunction with parent education offerings. Senior citizens and local junior and senior high students participate in program activities. A library of toys and learning materials is used extensively. Health screening for children under three is coordinated with the Bloomington Health Department.

MINNEAPOLIS: "Very Important People (VIP)"

Focusing on a large urban area, offices for this program are located in Jefferson Elementary School. Services are designed for families differing considerably in income level and ethnicity and residing in the West Cluster attendance area. The program employs paraprofessional outreach workers to provide family support and child development through regular home visits to a large number of families. These activities are supervised by a school social worker and an early childhood education teacher. Parent education group discussions are held in several community locations.

Local Program Staffing

Since early childhood and family education programs offer a variety of services to both parents and children, local staff come from a broad range of professional backgrounds. These include: early childhood education, child development, family life education, social work, nursing, counseling, and consumer homemaking.

During the process of negotiating each program's grant, the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force have required that program staff be appropriately qualified for their job duties. This policy has included a requirement that the lead teacher for child development activities possess a Minnesota nursery teaching license or its equivalent. Leaders of parent education activities are generally licensed by the Division of Vocational-Technical Education.

Although the Council and Task Force encourage local district hiring of paraprofessionals and community residents, they request that those persons have demonstrated competencies in the field of child development or a field appropriate to their specific job duties.

Local Parent Advisory Committees

According to the legislation, "Each pilot program shall provide for an advisory committee selected from the attendance area by the local board of education. A majority of the members of this committee shall be parents participating in the program." (Laws of Minnesota, 1977: Chapter 447) This committee is required to report to the Council on Quality Education, the local school board, and the district community education advisory council, if this council has been established.

Local advisory committees are responsible for advising program staff in the design, administration, and content of early childhood and family education services. The Council and its Advisory Task Force feel strongly that these committees provide an indispensible mechanism to ensure that local programs respond to the needs of the families they are intended to serve.

Eligibility Criteria for Services

Families are eligible for services offered by an early childhood and family education program if the adults are expectant parents, or parents of childrent aged birth to kindergarten enrollment, and if they live within the elementary school attendance area(s) served by the program. The legislation focuses services for each local program in the attendance area of one elementary school, although the Council is authorized to fund programs serving more than one such area at its discretion.

Everyone with children aged birth to kindergarten enrollment residing in the specified service area is eligible to voluntarily participate. (The financial implications of voluntary participation are discussed in Chapter 9 of this report.) The program is not only for "income-eligible" families. This characteristic distinguishes the early childhood and family education programs from other family services designed for "target" populations, such as Head Start. Participants in the programs come from a broad range of income levels and ethnic backgrounds. Local program staff are urged to obtain an approximately pro rata participation rate of persons from all cultural, ethnic, and income groups represented in the locally eligible population.

Techniques Used by Local Programs to Gain Participation

Since the concept of early childhood and family education is relatively new, and its piloting on a broad scale is unique to Minnesota, strong "outreach" efforts are necessary to gain participation from community residents. This is particularly true at the beginning of a local program's operation.

Program directors have ranked methods of outreach in order of their effectiveness. The most useful technique appears to be "word of mouth", or the recommendation of an involved person. Newsletters produced by local programs and mailed to all eligible families were rated second in importance. The third most effective technique was personal contact with eligible families by staff members and participating parents, such as advisory committee members. These personal contacts include home visits, telephone calls, and meetings with other community agencies. Announcements in area newspapers and community publications were ranked fourth. Finally, special events or "open houses" at the program centers were mentioned as a useful outreach method.

State Technical Assistance to Program Staff

The legislation places responsibility with the State Board of Education for offering support services to the pilot programs. Professional staff for the Council on Quality Education are officed in the Minnesota Department of Education and are charged with providing technical assistance to local early childhood and family education programs.

This assistance involves the use of existing Department services to inform the broadest possible audience when funding for new programs is available. Assistance to proposal writers is supplied through workshops and individual consultations. Local program budgets are carefully negotiated to ensure the provision of quality programs. This quality control is maintained through extensive monitoring of program operation, in-service workshops for local staff, and ongoing evaluation procedures.

Detailed Information on the Pilot Programs

Detailed information on the 22 currently funded early childhood and family education programs is provided in Table 3.1. Major service components provided by each program are coded according to the following list: (1) center-based parent and family education; (2) home-based parent and family education; (3) center-based child development activities; (4) early health screening and referral; (5) resource libraries of learning materials for parents and children; and (6) preparenting education for adolescents.

Summary Comments

This chapter described the implementation of the early childhood and family education concept in Minnesota. Many featrues of this implementation have been prescribed in the enabling legislation for the pilot programs (Laws of Minnesota, 1977: Chapter 447).

The discussion included narrative on the following points: the funding process; coordination with community services and other funding sources; service components offered by the programs; local staffing; parent advisory committees;

Table 3.1 CQE Early Childhood and Family Education
Programs and Grants
Fiscal Year 1979

January, 1979

PROGRAM LOCATION AND YEAR OF FUNDING	TITLE	ATTENDANCE AREA(S) SERVED	SERVICE COMPONENTS OFFERED	AGENCY CONTRACTS	FISCAL SUPPORT		
					CQE GRANT	OTHER FUNDS*	TOTAL FUNDS
Minneapolis Fifth Year	Very Important People (VIP)	Harrison Jefferson Kenwood (all in West Cluster)	1, 2, 3, 5		45,394	58,281	103,675
Rochester Fifth Year	Parents Are Important in Rochester (PAIR)	Washington Sunset Terrace Gage Hoover Elton Hills	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Olmsted Council for Coordinated Child Care Inc.	40,113	16,548	56,661
St. Paul Fifth Year	Dayton's Bluff Area Alternatives in ECFE	Dayton's Bluff Parkway Sheridan Highwood Hills	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Children's Home Society of Minn.	55,121	42,357	97,478
South St. Paul Fifth Year	Family Focus	Jefferson Lincoln Roosevelt Washington	1, 3, 5, 6		38,482	34,953	73,435
Staples Fifth Year	Rural Family Development (RFD)	Lincoln North	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6		34,875	16,480	54,355

*Other funding sources include: Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school district, Head Start, and other local agencies.

Table 3.1 CQE Early Childhood and Family Education Programs and Grants Fiscal Year 1979 (page 2)

January, 1979

PROGRAM LOCATION AND YEAR OF FUNDING	TITLE	ATTENDANCE AREA(S) SERVED	SERVICE COMPONENTS OFFERED	AGENCY CONTRACTS	FISCAL SUPPORT		
					CQE GRANT	OTHER FUNDS*	TOTAL FUNDS
Backus Fourth Year	Early Childhood Development Program	Backus	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Sandy's School for Little People, Inc.	33,295	3,668	36,963
Bloomington Fourth Year	Parent & Child: Growing Together	Valley View	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Bloomington Public Health Dept.	45,713	11,576	57,289
Lewiston Fourth Year	Bringing the School to the Community	Lewiston Altura	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6		28,333	6,482	34,815
Mankato Fourth Year	The Parent, the Child the School - Together	Franklin Monroe Jefferson	1, 2, 3, 5, 6		44,391	20,595	64,986
Minneapolis Fourth Year	Powderhorn Parent Program (PPP)	Laura Ingalls Wilder	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association	44,506	51,637	96,143

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*Other funding sources include: Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school district, Head Start, and other local agencies.

January, 1979

Table 3.1 CQE Early Childhood and Family Education Programs and Grants Fiscal Year 1979 (page 3)

PROGRAM LOCATION AND YEAR OF FUNDING	TITLE	ATTENDANCE AREA(S) SERVED	SERVICE COMPONENTS OFFERED	AGENCY CONTRACTS	FISCAL SUPPORT		
					CQE GRANT	OTHER FUNDS*	TOTAL FUNDS
Mounds View Fourth Year	Parents & Children Together (PACT)	Red Oak Valentine Hills	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Ramsey Cty. Nursing Service	48,869	15,880	64,749
Robbinsdale Fourth Year	Parent-Child Center	Forest Lakeview Crystal Heights Neill	1, 3, 4, 5, 6		17,816	2,004	19,820
White Bear Lake Third Year	Cooperative Neighborhood Early Childhood Education Center	Birch Lake Lincoln	1, 2, 3, 5, 6		37,163	5,741	42,904
Aitkin Second Year	Child-Oriented Parent Education (COPE)	Palisade Rippleside	1, 2, 3, 5		29,872	6,682	36,554
Bloomington Second Year	Cedarcrest Family Nurture Center	Cedarcrest	1, 3, 5, 6	Bloomington Public Health Dept.	48,160	12,050	60,210

*Other funding sources include: Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school district, Head Start, and other local agencies.

Table 3.1 CQE Early Childhood and Family Education Programs and Grants Fiscal Year 1979 (page 4)

January, 1979

PROGRAM LOCATION AND YEAR OF FUNDING	TITLE	ATTENDANCE AREA(S) SERVED	SERVICE COMPONENTS OFFERED	AGENCY CONTRACTS	FISCAL SUPPORT		
					CQE GRANT	OTHER FUNDS*	TOTAL FUNDS
Duluth Second Year	Parents of Young Children	Lincoln	1, 3, 4, 5		27,991	9,315	37,306
Fairmont Second Year	I Like Myself Program (ILM)	Budd Lincoln	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Minnesota Early Learning Design	42,985	6,610	49,595
Littlefork/Big Falls Second Year	Child and Parent Program (CAPP)	Littlefork Big Falls	1, 2, 3, 5, 6		28,417	10,990	39,407
Osseo Second Year	Parent Education Preschool Program (PEPP)	Willow Lane Zanewood	1, 3, 4, 5		12,895	17,053	29,948
St. Charles Second Year	Children and Parents in the Early Years	St. Charles	1, 3, 5, 6		20,729	3,208	23,937

*Other funding sources include: Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school district, Head Start, and other local agencies.

January, 1979

Table 3.1 CQE Early Childhood and Family Education
Programs and Grants
Fiscal Year 1979
(page 5)

PROGRAM LOCATION AND YEAR OF FUNDING	TITLE	ATTENDANCE AREA(S) SERVED	SERVICE COMPONENTS OFFERED	AGENCY CONTRACTS	FISCAL SUPPORT		
					CQE GRANT	OTHER FUNDS*	TOTAL FUNDS
St. Louis Park Second Year	Time Out	Peter Hobart Cedar Manor	1, 3, 4, 5, 6		42,386	13,993	56,379
St. Paul Second Year	Learning Circle	Jefferson Adams	1, 2, 3, 5	West Seventh Family Center	43,815	14,096	57,911

*Other funding sources include: Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school district, Head Start, and other local agencies.

eligibility criteria for program services as unrelated to the income level of families; outreach techniques used by local programs; and technical assistance provided by State-level staff. Further information on the 22 currently funded programs is provided in Table 3.1.

Although solidly based in the professional literature, the operating concept of early childhood and family education used in this program is relatively new. Its implementation and piloting on a broad scale is unique to Minnesota. Consequently, the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force have supported and encouraged variation among the programs that have comprised this State effort.

SECTION II: PERSPECTIVES ON MINNESOTA'S PILOT EFFORT

CHAPTER 4: PROGRAM EVALUATION

Introduction

Evaluation is an important part of all social programs. However, it is particularly critical in programs that have been funded for the purpose of piloting a concept. The State's early childhood and family education program has been in a pilot stage since its initial authorization by the 1974 Legislature. Consequently, the Council on Quality Education and the Advisory Task Force on Early Childhood and Family Education have conducted annual evaluations of the local programs using staff, consultants, and outside agencies.

At the time of its enactment, the early childhood and family education program was a concept. It had not been implemented other than in basically isolated instances, but the idea was amply supported by the research literature. In turn, this provided direction for evaluation efforts: to summarize the experience gained with operating pilot programs, and to feed this back into a process of refining the concept and improving the local programs.

After one year of experience with the program, the Task Force and the Council convened a team of consultants to provide expert assistance in further developing the evaluation design. In December, 1975, a noted evaluator and two research specialists, all with national reputations in the area of programs for very young children and their families, participated in this task. Dr. Dan Stufflebeam, Director of the Evaluation Center at Western Michigan University; Dr. Virginia Shipman, an authority on early childhood education with the Educational Testing Service; and Mr. Dennis Deloria, formerly Senior Research Consultant with the High/Scope Foundation (currently on staff with HEW's Office of the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families), met with persons on the Council, Task Force, staff, and the chairpersons of the Education Committees of the Legislature. Purposes of the program were reviewed and recommendations were made for its continuing evaluation. Overall, these suggestions strongly verified the need to systematically monitor the experience at the pilot sites and to translate this into program improvements.

Other suggestions indicated that efforts to "prove" that children participating in the programs would have, for example, better school achievement would be impossible within financial and time limitations related to the program. In this respect, the following factors were noted:

1. The program was not intended to provide full-time enrollment for children. Children would benefit more or less indirectly through increased sensitivity to their developmental needs on the part of parents and caregivers.
2. Improved parenting skills of adults would affect children over a very long period of time and might not be most noticeable in the first few years of elementary school.
3. There are many dimensions of a child's development other than simply scoring well on tests of academic achievement. Yet, instrumentation and techniques for adequately measuring these forms of growth are weak and an evaluation design utilizing them would be extremely costly.
4. More extensively financed research had been conducted which provided a sufficient base for proceeding with the program.

> 5. The most critical need was to find out if the concept was workable in a variety of settings and if programs utilizing it could attain community acceptance and participation.

Annual evaluation studies were conducted during the period encompassing fiscal years 1975 to 1978. Overall, the studies trace a series of subtle changes in the operation of early childhood and family education programs. The reports also show a continued growth in participation and acceptance by families, as well as increasing competence shown by local staff persons.

As the early childhood and family education programs began the 1978-79 year, the evaluation emphasis broadened. While continuing to document participant receptivity and to assess the success of implementation by the 22 local programs, an effort to evaluate the *quality* of services has begun. Working with members of the Council and Task Force, CQE and local staff, the evaluation agency has established a series of criteria for the service components (e.g., parent and family education, child development activities) and administrative characteristics (e.g., program environment, staff) of the programs (Patton, 1978; Patton et al., 1978). On-site review teams included persons with expertise in early childhood and family education and in evaluation. They have examined each local program with respect to these criteria. (A preliminary report has been prepared and will be available for distribution in February, 1979).

The Council and Task Force see this as a logical and helpful evolution in the evaluation effort. Previous data indicated that the programs had demonstrated good implementation of the ECFE concept, and that parents' feelings and comments about the services they received were highly positive. At this point, the evaluation would attempt to insure that the ECFE services were of high quality and to identify points needing improvement.

This chapter provides an overview of the evaluation efforts to date. Detailed reports for each year are available on request from the Council on Quality Education office.

Evaluation, Fiscal Year 1975

In the first year of appropriations for early childhood and family education, CQE and the Task Force awarded grants to six pilot programs. A contract for evaluation services was let to the (then) Aries Corporation of Minneapolis.

Since this was the beginning of the attempt to transform the concept of early childhood and family education into an operating program, the firm's evaluation design was mainly directed at describing the implementation in the six sites. The primary audiences were the Council, Task Force, and CQE staff, all of whom had a major responsibility for working with the local programs to solve problems and make improvements.

Specific evaluation procedures included: (1) reviewing the objectives in the funding proposal for each program, (2) visiting program sites, (3) surveying participating parents, and (4) describing the impact of each program on a small number of families in individual case studies. Additional efforts by the evaluators included providing frequent feedback to CQE staff and, more intermittently, to the Council and Task Force.

The year-end report from the evaluator (Johnson, 1975) emphasized that the local programs had evolved during the year, partly reflecting their efforts to focus more clearly on the concept of early childhood and family education. The report also provided a detailed summary of each program, including a description of its clientele, objectives, organization and staffing, outreach efforts, programming activites, and participation. Other conclusions and recommendations included:

1. Using a strategy for continued development of the early childhood and family education concept that would examine and fund more diverse operating models and/or continue to develop increasing refinements in a single model;
2. Improving the analysis of the costs of each program;
3. Working to increase participation by families and helping local programs accomplish this with inservice training in outreach techniques;
4. Increasing and improving communication between local program staff and elementary school personnel;
5. Strengthening the organization of curriculum for parents; and
6. Clarifying the objectives for children's participation.

Evaluation, Fiscal Year 1976

During the second year of the early childhood and family education program, evaluation services were provided by an individual consultant, Judith Oberaigner, and were augmented by a telephone survey of parents conducted by the Minnesota Center for Socal Research (MCSR). Prior to the beginning of this year, the Legislature had increased the appropriation. Consequently, the Council and Task Force were able to fund seven new programs. In addition, five programs received funding for continuation. (The request for continuation funds from one of the original six sites was not approved.) Thus, the number of operating local programs grew to 12 in the 1975-76 year.

Overall, the evaluation procedures and design strongly emphasized the process of refining the concept of early childhood and family education. As noted previously, members of the Council, Task Force, and staff had an opportunity to examine this direction with a panel of persons with experience related to evalution and early childhood and family education in a December, 1975 conference.

The individual consultant worked closely throughout the year with CQE staff and reported directly to subcommittees of the Council and Task Force on several occasions during that time. The work of MCSR was supervised by the consultant, and commenced in the Spring, 1976, when the sample of parents from the 12 pilot locations was surveyed by telephone interviewers.

A year-end evaluation report (Oberaigner, 1976) was prepared the following summer. It provided extensive descriptive information about each of the local programs which was compiled through a written questionnaire and the evaluation consultant's observations gathered during on-site visits.

Results of the telephone survey of parents were also included in the report.

Conclusions and recommendations included the following:

1. The evaluator stressed that the qualifications and competence of local staff persons comprise the single most important strength of the programs. The report noted that staff had devoted substantial amounts of extra time and shown exceptional resourcefulness in meeting unanticipated needs and in making local changes.

2. The evaluation concluded that the 12 programs had gathered momentum during the year and gained the community's acceptance.

3. It was noted that methods of collecting data and keeping records for the local programs needed to be improved. In particular, the report recommended clearer identification of the component services and relating participation figures to staffing and other costs for these services.

4. The consultant felt that stated objectives of the local programs lacked sufficient specificity. It was also suggested that each program prepare a statement of its philosophy to clarify the framework of its activities and to promote more understanding of its purposes.

5. The evaluator recommended that CQE change the process of applying for new and continuation grants to reduce the time consumed in writing the application and to shorten the time it takes for start-up of a program.

6. It was noted that programs were operating mainly in accord with the typical school calendar. The consultant recommended this be examined, both to ascertain if activities should be available at other times and to create clearer operating schedules.

7. The report recommended examining the time local staff spend in contact with parents and children out of their total paid time. Concern was expressed about the practice of several programs starting staff several weeks before and after the period clients can participate.

8. It was also recommended that local sites establish their own internal evaluation procedures to assure that they were responding to the needs of parents.

Results of the telephone survey of a sample of parents, conducted by the Minnesota Center for Social Research, were also reviewed in the consultant's report. Nearly all parents gave a very high rating to their respective program. It was found that, for many families, the initial attraction was a specific service (e.g., health screening) and the opportunity for their child to interact with other children. A substantial majority said they planned to continue participating. Finally, the responses showed that parents generally enjoyed learning more about parenting and felt their children benefited by the developmental experiences.

Evaluation, Fiscal Year 1977

As the program proceeded with its third year of operation, evaluation responsibilities were shifted mainly to the Minnesota Center for Social Research (MCSR), a non-profit evaluation agency affiliated with the University of Minnesota. Ancillary support for evaluation data collecting was provided by CQE administrative staff. An individual consultant, Dr. Lee Joiner, was retained to summarize this information and prepare a synthesis of the overall effort.

From a design standpoint, the overall evaluation emphasis continued to be that of gathering information from the operating sites to further refine the concept of early childhood and family education. Quantitatively, data collected about participation and costs were modified and given more emphasis.

The number of local program sites increased slightly. During the previous year, the Council had approved a grant for another early childhood program out of its funds for *innovative/cost-effective* grants. As the program was implemented, its similarity to the 12 programs piloted with the early childhood and family education funds became apparent. Accordingly, its funding source was changed, and the number of pilot sites increased to 13.

The evaluation work of the MCSR was performed through the use of teams who visited each of the 13 sites. The major purpose was to study the extent to which the local programs had successfully implemented the concept of early childhood and family education. The principal mechanism used was on-site interviews with participants, advisory committee members, program staff, and other school personnel. These efforts were augmented with observation of the activities at each program.

The report prepared by MCSR (Patton, 1977) provides detailed findings related both to the individual programs and to broader characteristics of the overall effort. The extensive discussion in the report proved to be a source of critical suggestions for the continued improvement of the program and concept.

In a major section, MCSR described its findings in relation to various types of services (e.g., parent education classes, home visits) across the

13 programs. In prefacing these comments, the report states: ". . . in our experience with demonstration projects, it is unusual to find programs where implementation so closely follows intent, and where program implementation has been so thorough, so intense, and so successful." (Patton, 1977, p.5.)

With respect to the types of services at the 13 sites, the report noted that parent education was the central emphasis at all but one location. That program was mainly concerned with child development activities.

While most of the sites were reported as having a group format for parent education, MCSR noted considerable variation in the way this component is operated. Some sites had a required minimum period of participation, while others allowed occasional attendance and/or did not specify a particular enrollment term.

Interview questions explored perceptions about the purposes and outcomes of parent education. Responses indicated that the major strengths of parent education sessions were: (1) getting mutual support from other parents; (2) creating a situation in which parents and children are in school together; (3) reducing feelings of isolation; (4) learning from other parents; and (5) gaining new information about child development. The most frequently mentioned weaknesses were: (1) the need to get more participation; (2) solving problems of transportation to the program sites; and (3) poor space and facilities.

Interviews also dealt with the value of the child development sessions conducted by most programs. The report noted how closely this is related to the parent education component, and that adult participants frequently observe the children's activities as part of the parent education format.

Responses of staff outlined the major strengths of this component as: (1) providing opportunities for the child to be with other children; (2) helping the child make the transition from an individual relationship with the parent to group situations; and (3) helping parents to improve their interaction with their child.

The report reviewed services delivered in home visits to parents and children, and noted this involves a relatively high cost. It pointed out, however, that this format is useful in serving families who live in isolated circumstances.

Additional observations were made about the remaining service components: library loans of learning materials, early health screening, and pre-parenting education for adolescents. Interviews with persons not part of the local program staff (e.g., other school personnel) were also summarized in the report.

In terms of local administration, the interview team gathered information about efforts to recruit participation (outreach), the operation of local advisory committees, program facilities, and staff for the programs. In each of the first three areas, some problems were noted. However, the report commented that the quality of the local staff is a "major area of strength."

A significant point in the report is the recommendation that more "hard" data should be gathered to document the effects of the programs. It points out that persons who were interviewed *believe* that the local activities are having an important impact, but that these subjective observations should be supported further ". . . to carefully fill in the details."

The Center conducted a telephone survey of parents participating at the 13 sites. As was the case in the preceding year, overall responses were highly positive.

Parents were also asked to comment on the degree to which they felt they had changed as a result of the program. Three-fourths, or about 74 percent, reported they had changed either "a great deal" or "somewhat."

The report concluded that, overall, these discussions strongly reinforced the observation that the programs were exhibiting strong implementation of the legislation's major concept: helping the parent perform the parenting role. Over 80 percent of those interviewed also rated their respective program as "very effective."

A final and major section of the report provided a detailed description of each program site, its activities, and overall operation. Reports of the site-visit team's observation and ratings of specific activities were also included.

Administrative staff for CQE collected data specifically related to local costs and participation from each of the 13 program sites. Again, the main purpose was to aid in refining the implementation and concept of the early childhood and family education program. In a summary of cost and participation information (Council on Quality Education, 1978b) an overall cost for each participant of $169 per year was identified. It was pointed out that CQE funds accounted for about 81 percent of this cost, or $137, with the remainder received from other sources.

The summary also noted, however, that this figure varied considerably between program sites, reflecting such factors as differences in how much service was typically provided to a family, the "mix" of activities offered in the local program, and whether the site was in a relatively new stage of implementation.

This analysis also related program costs to the State foundation aid level for each pupil unit. By combining CQE and all other sources of funds, the 13 programs had a cost for each participant of about 18 percent of that aid level. Additional discussion of cost data for fiscal year 1977 is presented in Chapter 8.

Finally, the summary focused on the issue of whether or how much uniformity should exist between program sites in their costs. It noted that existing variation was partly attributable to local program discretion in selecting service delivery formats (e.g., center- vs. home-based). It also highlighted the usefulness of these data in further program development and administration.

In a synthesis by Dr. L.M. Joiner (1978), information was presented which dealt very broadly with both the preceding data and file documentation for the 13 local programs. The report reviewed the purpose, rationale, and legislation for early childhood and family education, as well as selected aspects of the programs such as the various services, local advisory committees, outreach procedures, and staffing considerations. In particular, the synthesis stated that:

> During the three years since their inception, the programs have grown and changed, discovering and developing the mix of services best suited to each locality. Yet all of these programs were centered around the broad program offerings suggested by the Minnesota Legislature. (Joiner, 1978, pp. 62-63)

The summary concludes by commenting on the future directions and evaluation of early childhood and family education.

Evaluation, Fiscal Years 1978 and 1979

The 1977 Legislature increased the appropriation for pilot sites and stipulated that a minimum of 22 locations in rural, suburban, and urban areas receive grants. The Council and Advisory Task Force took action to add the necessary nine new programs the following summer.

Because the programs would probably continue for both years of the biennium, the evaluation cycle was modified. A design was developed which would produce a series of related reports. Components of this biennial evaluation plan include:

1. Preparation and updating of descriptive abstracts for operation of each local program (Spring of each year).
2. Interviews of participating parents by telephone (Spring of 1978).
3. Collection of detailed participation and cost data (Summer of each year).
4. Development of criteria to assess the quality of services, for use by a team of independent observers (Fall of 1978).
5. Administration of a survey of elementary principals and teachers in each of the local program service areas to assess the impact of services (Winter of 1979).
6. Administration of a survey of participating and non-participating parents in the local program service areas (Spring of 1979).

Local program staff have authored abstracts that provide a source of current information for purposes of evaluation and dissemination. The abstracts were prepared in the Spring of 1978 in accord with a standard format and will be updated annually.

The Minnesota Center for Social Research (MCSR) was again retained to conduct telephone interviews of a sample of participating parents from each program. In its report (Patton, 1978), findings were generally consistent with those of previous years. Those interviewed provided an average rating of 3.7 on scale of 0-4, with zero representing low or undesirable ratings. Nearly all the respondents, 95 percent, said that funding for early childhood and family education should be viewed as either an "important" or "top" priority. Over 90 percent of the parents indicated that their participation in the program had helped "a great deal" or "somewhat." Responses concerned with the strengths of the local efforts centered on the opportunities for parents and children to meet other parents and children and on the value of the interaction. As with previous evaluations, parents commented on the high quality of local staff as an important strength of the programs. Most participants cited their desire for a source of stimulation for their children as the main reason they had become involved in this program. MCSR hypothesized that while most parents initially are looking for activities that will stimulate their children, their continued participation is based on the stimulation they receive in the activities designed for adults.

The most frequently mentioned weakness of the local programs was the need to expand services, either in the number of people that can be accommodated or with respect to the length of time services are offered. The interviews also included questions asking how long parents had participated. Responses varied greatly and ranged from one month to 36 months or more. The average number of participation instances, however, was over 50.

Administrative staff for the Council on Quality Education again summarized cost and participation data for fiscal 1978. This information is discussed in detail in Chapter 8. However, it is significant to note that overall costs per participant have dropped, and that the share of these costs provided through funding sources other than CQE has increased. The average cost per participant for the 22 locations in fiscal 1978, including all funds was $139, compared with the previously mentioned amount of $169 for fiscal 1977. The portion paid with CQE grant funds dropped from 81 percent in fiscal 1977 to 65 percent last year. Compilation of these data for fiscal 1979 will be completed during the summer of 1979.

The annual average number of participants in the various services at the pilot programs has tended to increase from year to year. The six programs funded in fiscal year 1975 served a total of 781 participants in parent education and child development activities, which is an average of 130 parents and children for each program. The 22 programs funded in fiscal year 1978 served a total of 7,636 participants in parent education and child development activities, which is an average of 347 parents and children served by each program. In the Fall of 1978, all fourth and fifth year programs (12 of 22) reported that they were operating at capacity. Several of these maintained waiting lists of parents and children interested in joining the program.

Prior evaluations had indicated that local programs successfully implemented the concept of early childhood and family education. Moreover, responses of parents to the program have been very positive. Members of the Council and the Advisory Task Force felt that this would represent an appropriate point to assess the *quality* of the services provided at the local sites.

Contractual arrangements were again made to have the Minnesota Center for

Social Research (MCSR) coordinate the difficult task of defining quality criteria and standards of excellence for early childhood and family education programs. In the Spring of 1978, Dr. Michael Patton, Director of the Center, began work with staff from each of the local program sites, as well as members of the Council, Task Force, and CQE staff. A final list of criteria was adopted in the Fall (Minnesota Council on Quality Education, 1978a).

In October and November, 1978, teams from MCSR conducted on-site reviews at each of the 22 programs and made detailed use of the criteria. The report (Patton et al., 1978) stated that:

> . . . the overall conclusion of the site visit team is that the CQE programs are models of high quality parent education. It is unusual to find programs where implementation is of such a consistently high quality in accordance with basic legislative intent. Parent education is the core of the CQE early childhood and family education concept. Our observations affirm that the basic parent education core has moved beyond the concept phase into high quality implementation. (p. 28)

The report also contributed to the objective of improving the programs. It presented recommendations to enhance program quality and noted that ". . . we are able to direct our feedback at these relatively minor issues because we were so profoundly respectful of the overall quality of the programs and of the CQE administrative staff." (p. 62) The recommendations suggested the following:

1. CQE administration, staff, local advisory committees, and participants should take special care in the on-going development of program plans to maintain focus on the central strengths of the CQE approach to Early Childhood and Family Education: a clear focus on parent education; a clear focus on parents as the primary targets of program activities; the maintenance of knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and committed staff; sensitivity to local needs and interests while maintaining a delicate balance between leadership and followship; and coordination with other community service organizations.

2. The role of local advisory committees needs to be continually examined so that advisory boards are active and relevant. Advisory boards should focus in particular on ways of supporting program autonomy, building consistency and stability into program activities, and maintaining high quality program staff.

3. Home visits need to be carefully examined to determine if the frequent focus on children has reduced the impact, or potential impact, of home visits on parents.

4. Outreach efforts need to be examined to determine if they have become overly routine and unproductive in programs that are operating at capacity. In particular, older programs need to examine their outreach efforts with regard to special populations and the amount of program resources being devoted to outreach.

5. The programs were generally characterized as having relatively low levels of meaningful parent input into the content and processes of the programs. Older programs which have worked with certain parents for several years are especially urged to examine ways in which those parents might play more productive roles in program activities. Experienced parents can be used for outreach efforts, for home visits, to assist in children's activities, and even to lead and facilitate parent discussion groups.

6. Needs assessment has been defined relatively narrowly in many programs. It has focused mainly on census data and interest questionnaires distributed to participants. A more clinical approach to needs assessment that provides for greater individualization of parent education might increase the impact of staff efforts.

> 7. There is a need to develop strategies to increase communications among programs and to provide more opportunities for program directors and other program staff to come together to reflect on what they are doing and to share information about how to do things better. Much of this sharing could revolve around the special strengths of particular programs which excel in certain areas like home visits, outreach, curriculum planning, etc.
>
> 8. Closely related to the preceding point is the need to reduce the isolation of professional staff in small rural programs. Efforts in this direction may particularly require the leadership of CQE staff in the state office.
>
> 9. The quality of evaluation data being collected by and for local programs shows great variation. Many programs need encouragement and direction with regard to the importance of and methods for conducting local program evaluations. (Patton et al., 1978, pp. 62-63)

Summary Comments

This chapter has provided an overview of evaluation reportage for the Minnesota early childhood and family education programs since their inception in 1974. The general design of these evaluations has been to focus on refining the concept through the experience gained in the pilot programs. Evaluation responsibilities have been performed by individual consultants, outside agencies, CQE staff, and local programs' personnel.

Over time, the findings have reflected a steady growth in the quality of program services and administration. However, this documentation has also helped identify a variety of areas that have needed improvement. Consequently, the reports have been extremely useful in administering this pilot effort.

The most consistent evaluation findings document the strong competence and commitment of the staff persons in the local programs, and the favorable attitudes of participating parents. There has also been substantial agreement among evaluators about the strength of the program and its concept.

Members of the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force on early childhood and family education have recommended that this program receive support for a controlled expansion, eventually resulting in the availability of these services throughout Minnesota. Recognizing, however, that this will involve increasing appropriations, additional funds are being sought from other sources (federal and foundation) to implement a long-term followup of individual participants. It is hoped that along with continued evaluation efforts, this data system will provide a more detailed documentation of the program's impact over time.

CHAPTER 5: AREAS OF AGREEMENT IN PROVIDING SERVICES

Introduction

As noted in Chapter 1, the Council and Advisory Task Force identified five objectives for this policy study. The discussion in this chapter addresses the following objective: To highlight areas of agreement among major organizations in early childhood and family education at the State and national levels. The following chapter focuses on another objective: To provide the opportunity for a comprehensive review of concerns related to the delivery of early childhood and family education services at the State level.

To partially fulfill both of these objectives, a consultant was retained to prepare an extensive review of the professional literature, and to summarize information about related programs in other parts of the country. The consultant, Janice Colbert, concluded her report late in 1977 (see Appendix C). In a presentation to the Council and Task Force, she identified a variety of points related to the need for parent-focused early childhood programs, and criteria for designing these services, on which there is broad agreement and consensus. While "issues," or areas of debate were also noted in the report, it should be pointed out that these were centered around the control and governance of programs, and not on the value of the services to parents and children.

Since the report dealt with these areas of agreement and issues in a national context, further steps were included within the study to check their validity and examine their scope within Minnesota. Consequently, the Council and Task Force held a series of meetings with representatives of organizations and agencies having a critical role in or major concern with how early childhood and family education services are provided in the State.

Persons attending the meetings included: State legislators, elementary principals of schools served by the currently funded 22 Minnesota pilot programs, local program staff, Department of Education personnel, and representatives of other State-level organizations and agencies (identified in Appendix B) involved in serving families of young children.

This chapter will discuss the areas of agreement both nationally and within the State regarding early childhood and family education. A later chapter will focus on the issues related to delivery of those services in Minnesota.

The Need for Early Childhood and Family Education

A series of statistics provided in Chapter 2 of this report indicate that families in Minnesota and other states are under stress from increasing social and economic pressures. Many parent/early childhood researchers recommend a comprehensive, long-range effort to support parents and young children and strengthen families in response to these pressures.

Bronfenbrenner suggests that a "network of caring services" be developed to assist parents, including: (1) flexible work schedules and other arrangements to cater to the diverse circumstances of families; (2) programs to involve parents in the education of their children: (3) neighborhood centers to help parents develop skills as educational and behavioral change agents for their children; and (4) providing information and services to families in the home setting, such as parenting and nutrition information, access to medical care, television teaching and homemaker services. (Bronfenbrenner, 1972a)

The Effectiveness of Parent-Focused Early Childhood Education

A significant number of research studies of programs for parents and children in various parts of the country (reviewed in Chapter 2 of this report) have shown that early childhood education is most effective when the parents are involved. "The involvement of the parents as partners in the enterprise provides an ongoing system which can reinforce the effects of the program while it is in operation, and help to sustain them after the program ends." (Bronfenbrenner, 1974c) Additionally, there is growing documentation of the potential of the programs to be cost-effective in reducing special education expenditures in later years.

The results of these studies imply that early childhood education programs should be designed to include a focus on parents. This conclusion is strongly supported by professionals both within Minnesota and in other states. There is general consensus, however, that more long-range data on the impact of parent-focused early intervention programs is needed.

The characteristics of programs which have been effective in having a positive impact on families extend beyond simply involving parents. The professional literature provides an abundant supply of good operating suggestions. A representative list of these suggestions was developed by social scientists and education practitioners at the National Conference on Parent/Early Childhood Education in 1975. Quality criteria presented in the conference report (p. 53) included:

1. Flexibility;
2. Capacity to hire people with differing backgrounds;
3. Capacity to conduct programs in different kinds of facilities;
4. Capacity to operate during hours which are appropriate to families and children who need services;

5. Capacity to work with parents and children together or with each separately as needed;

6. Capacity for engendering enthusiasm and commitment among staff and clients;

7. Capacity for securing community involvement and support;

8. Capacity for providing alternative solutions for a wide variety of identified needs, and permitting community and parent choice of options;

9. Capacity for involving parents directly in the decision-making relative to planning and implementation of programs;

10. Capacity for meeting multiple social and economic needs when appropriate, e.g., providing employment for trained and trainable people and using under-utilized facilities;

11. Capacity for being imaginative, creative, and innovative;

12. Capacity for clear definition of purposes, objectives and procedures;

13. Capacity for drawing upon the resources of several agencies when appropriate;

14. Capacity for involving the private sector in planning and implementation;

15. Capacity for involving women and minorities as practitioners, professionals and program administrators;

16. Capacity for self-renewal and adaptability to respond to changing needs;

17. Accountability;

18. Capacity for involving and drawing upon the resources of all levels of government;

19. Capacity for a comprehensive range of services to be delivered as individuals require them, e.g., nutrition, health care, recreation, psychological and social services, and education in cognitive, psycho-motor and affective areas;

20. Capacity for maximum utilization of media and materials for both programming and dissemination purposes; and

21. Capacity for making services available to all parents of all young children.

Cautions for Family Programming

Two cautionary views regarding the provision of early childhood and family education are frequently noted. First, as Morgan (1977) has indicated, there is often too much discussion among policy makers about what families "should do." Programs become destructive when they display no trust in the family's abilities to plan for themselves and their children. A more effective approach is to offer a variety of services to parents and to provide them with information on the options.

Secondly, parent education should not be viewed as a panacea for the problems of families or society. Social scientists have emphasized the need to focus on childhood environments and to recognize that social and economic conditions exert a critical influence on parents and children. Even with extensive parent intervention, children and parents from low income families will need many other forms of support, such as income supports, jobs, health care, and adequate nutrition.(Bronfenbrenner, 1974; Datta, 1973; and Keniston, 1977)

Summary Comments

Objectives of this policy study include identification and discussion of areas of agreement and issues related to the provision of early childhood and family education. This chapter summarized the processes used to accomplish these objectives and reviewed areas of agreement on the provision of family services. These include: (1) the need for early childhood and family education; (2) the effectiveness of parent-focused early childhood education; (3) criteria for service delivery; and (4) frequent cautions against infringing on the autonomy of parents or regarding parent education as a panacea for the full range of family problems.

CHAPTER 6: ISSUES INVOLVED WITH PROVIDING SERVICES

Introduction

As pointed out in the preceding chapter, the major issues related to early childhood and family education involve its administrative aspects, not whether the services are of value to very young children and their families.

The purpose of this chapter is to review these issues, both with respect to their statement at the national level, and in terms of the reactions they have generated by interested parties in Minnesota.

As discussed previously, issues (and areas of agreement) were identified initially in an extensive review of the literature (Colbert, 1977). This report also provided a frame of reference broader than Minnesota. Subsequently, members of the Council on Quality Education and its Advisory Task Force conducted a series of meetings to provide a forum for the discussion of issues within the context of the State. The meetings and participating groups are listed below.

* State Legislators - - July 12, 1978
* Principals of elementary schools served by the 22 local programs - - September 13, 1978
* Staff persons for the pilot programs - - September 22, 1978

- Department of Education personnel - - November 22, 1978
- State-level early childhood organizations and agencies (identified in Appendix B) - - December 7, 1978

The summary of these discussions will not identify comments of specific participants. For a more detailed account of the proceedings, meeting syntheses are available on request.

Program Sponsorship

The issue of which agencies should administer and "sponsor" early childhood and family education programs was highlighted in the review of the literature conducted for the Council and Task Force. It received considerable attention in the policy discussions conducted for this study.

In considering this issue with the various discussants, note was taken of the fact that CQE funds can only be transmitted to a local school district under the present State legislation for the program. While other agencies have successfully participated as providers of services by contracting with school districts, operating virtually the entire program at three sites, their involvement is presently an option for the local education agency.

Throughout the policy discussions, there was a strong consensus on the need to ensure participation by non-school agencies in delivering services when appropriate in a particular local situation. There was disagreement as to whether the opportunity to make direct application should be confined to local school districts. Some participants in the discussions felt strongly that the mechanism of allowing participation by non-school agencies through contracting may be insufficient to encourage a reasonable amount of this involvement and to prevent duplication of existing services by newly funded programs operated by schools.

One alternative to the existing pattern of making grants available only to school districts is to open submissions on a competitive basis to any qualified agency - public, or non-profit private in nature. This was discussed. Arguments in its support included: (1) increased likelihood that services would be made available in communities where the local school district is not interested in early childhood and family education, and (2) reduced possibilities that new programs would duplicate, or fail to coordinate with, existing services.

Strong arguments were made against this alternative. First, difficulties were foreseen in establishing whether the potential breadth of non-school applicants would be sufficiently accountable for the use of public monies. Second, there was concern about maintaining open eligibility for participation by all parents, irrespective of income, since many existing agencies have traditionally provided services mainly for "target" families. Third, the view that the primary purpose of the CQE early childhood and family education programs is educational in nature was brought out by other discussants. For the most part, these counter arguments emphasized retaining the provision that the local school district must apply for the funds, but within a context of strong encouragement for their receptivity to the involvement of other qualified agencies through contracts for services.

Types of Families To Be Served

Participants in the policy discussions noted the unique nature of early childhood and family education programs, compared with other efforts to assist very young children and their families, in that they impose no income eligibility or related restrictions on participation. There was general agreement that the need for support in the parenting role is not related to a family's income, ethnicity, or level of education. Consequently, discussants were almost unanimous in their support for continuing this feature of Minnesota's early childhood and family education legislation.

An area of concern, however, was whether local programs could successfully obtain participation from the cross-section of the families in their service areas, including minorities, low-income persons, and single or working parents. Concommitantly, portions of the discussion noted that the local staff and the parent advisory committees should reflect the diversity of the population to be served. Discussants also recommended that the Council and Task Force monitor programs' participation in terms of demographic characteristics more closely, and that a monopolizing of services by middle-income parents be prevented. The development of guidelines to help programs find ways of reaching families at-risk, based on low income, a history of family violence, marital status, and related criteria, was suggested.

The Role of Parents in Local Program Advisory Committees

Throughout the literature on programming for young children is a deep concern about the role of parents, both as participants and as decision-makers in matters of program governance. Participants in the discussions reviewed provisions in the existing legislation, noting that each program must have an advisory committee appointed by the school board, with a majority of parents. The committee reports to the local board, the district's community education committee, and CQE.

Noting that legislative language makes these committees *advisory*, some discussants suggested that assigning responsibilities in areas such as staffing should be considered. For example, this has been an effective feature of Head Start. Others noted, however, that Head Start was partly intended to raise parents' social and economic status, whereas Minnesota's programs are concerned with families of all income levels. Therefore, it was suggested that local advisory efforts be mainly concerned with the suitability of the program to the immediate community with respect to deciding the appropriateness of content for parent education and, also, with outreach.

Recognizing, nonetheless, some continuing potential for local conflict in this area, some participants suggested that flexible guidelines should be developed to assist local programs in working with their respective committees as they attempt to develop a role that complements the purpose of the legislation and the community circumstances.

Qualifications of Staff

A major finding in the evaluation of Minnesota's early childhood and family education programs has been that the quality of staff is crucial to their successful implementation. On the issue of identifying specific qualifications, however, a variety of concerns were expressed in the policy discussions. First, the State Board of Teaching does not license parent educators, although licensure requirements have been adopted by the Division of Vocational-Technical Education in the Department of Education. Second, training uniquely suited to the needs of local administrators of early childhood and family education programs is not presently available. Third, while respondents agreed that State licensure for professionals working with young children (nursery or pre-kindergarten) is critical to providing quality services, they also felt that allowances should be made for inclusion of paraprofessional staff without extensive academic credentials in this type of service. Fourth, while there is no shortage generally of persons with professional training in working with young children or parents, minorities may be severely underrepresented in this pool.

Most respondents felt that appropriate teaching licenses should be utilized for staffing professional positions, but that position descriptions should also outline competencies that appear necessary for success in all job functions. Areas in which competencies could be identified would include experience or training in child development,working with community groups, communications skills, adult learning methods, and health and safety. There was general agreement that these competency areas could also be useful in selecting paraprofessional staff. It was also suggested that parent advisory committees have some opportunity to be consulted in the hiring process.

Minimum Standards for Program Facilities

During the course of the policy discussions, note was taken of the fact that, while school enrollments are declining, there has been a tendency to close unutilized buildings, creating increased competition for the remaining space. It was pointed out that providing adequate facilities is especially critical with respect to areas in which developmental activities for young children are to be conducted.

Participants noted that strict observation of high standards for these facilities could discourage school districts from applying for early childhood and family education funds. On the other hand, concern was expressed that a lack of standards would yield low quality programs. Some consideration was devoted to amending statute to allow districts applying for these funds to increase their mill levy to accomodate capital outlays for rennovating facilities.

General agreement was reached that some minimal guidelines and provisions for their enforcement should be applied. Several respondents proposed use of the health and safety requirements for day care facilities utilized by the Department of Public Welfare. There was further accord that some guidelines should be developed for parent education facilities.

Some participants expressed concern that any planning for new or remodeled facilities take into account possibilities for multiple use of the space by other agencies in the community. It was also suggested that school districts not establish new facilities for children's activities which might duplicate appropriately equipped sites in existing community programs.

Participation Through Elementary School Attendance Areas

One of the unique features of the Minnesota legislation is that it establishes an elementary school's boundaries as the service area for an early childhood and family education program. In the initial (1974) legislation, programs were limited to serving families in these areas, reflecting a strong emphasis on localism in the delivery and accessibility of services to families with very young children.

This provision has presented some complexities as CQE and the Task Force have gained experience with the program. Since this feature is unique to the State's program, it is not discussed in the literature. However, in urban and suburban settings, elementary school boundaries have been in some state of flux. As enrollments declined, and as desegregation continued, buildings were closed and attendance areas have been melded to increase dispersion of minority students. In outstate communities, elementary buildings have also been closed.

The Council and Task Force received an amendment giving them discretion to fund a program serving more than one elementary school area, but the legislation retained its emphasis on this unit in defining participation boundaries. As a further complexity, a 1977 amendment was attached to the increase in the number of programs approved in that appropriation. It limited each district to two programs. CQE did not request this change, but its apparent intent was to assure that outstate districts would continue to receive a reasonable share of the increased number of pilot programs.

A perhaps unanticipated interaction between these two amendments surfaced. It was possible that their combined effect would encourage a large district to request the maximum of two grants covering an entire city, and each serving multiple elementary areas. The Council and Task Force have discussed this possibility, although a proposal of this scope has not been submitted. They have expressed concern that this would be contrary to the localism embodied in the emphasis on serving an elementary school area.

A second dimension of this issue received more attention in the policy discussions: whether the emphasis on the elementary attendance area precludes or severely limits participation by qualified non-school agencies in providing services through contracts with the local school district. Few non-school agencies serve areas coterminous with school districts, or elementary attendance areas. Consequently, their participation on a contracting basis may require them to serve areas smaller or different than their normal patterns.

Answers to the questions represented by this issue were not easily identified. However, there was some concurrence in the policy discussions on the position that the strong emphasis on providing services within an elementary school's attendance area should be relaxed somewhat. Instead, this should be an option of the local school district. However, the area to be served should be clearly defined. Moreover, proposals to operate a single program serving an entire city or large outstate region should not be funded, since certain integral aspects of the concept of early childhood and family education would be negated at that scale of structuring services.

Costs of the Program

The review of the literature revealed substantial and growing interest in the costs and benefits of parent-focused early childhood education. However, some limits were noted with respect to the applicability of this information to the programs receiving support under the Minnesota legislation. Many programs on which this research is based are in other parts of the country, and have been focused on poor families and/or provided more intensive and costly services. For example, a child care or nursery program may involve the child in excess of 40 hours a week at an annual cost of over $2,000. In comparison, Minnesota's programs had an average per participant cost (counting both children and parents) of less than $140 during fiscal year 1978, including funds from CQE and other sources. The child and parent were typically involved once or twice during the week over periods of a few weeks to the length of a school year.

Nontheless, members of the Council and Task Force have reviewed this growing base of data at the national level. For example, Irving Lazar of Cornell University is directing collection of data from 12 programs around the country. to ascertain the long-term effects and cost-benefits of parent focused early childhood education programs (1978). Preliminary analyses reveal highly favorable documentation of the value of these expenditures, especially with respect to their potential to prevent problems that require later (and more costly) remediation.

The Council and Advisory Task Force have recommended that non-State funds be sought to collect data on participating families and children over a long-term period (i.e., ten years or more). Their membership feels it is critical to have information specific to the operational concept, format of services, spread of participants, and cost levels related to the State's model of early childhood and family education. Moreover, it was noted that other states have been encouraged to utilize this concept. This was accomplished by the addition of portions of the legislative language for the program to recently revised federal education laws. Collection of comprehensive data on Minnesota's programs would, therefore, appear to be of potential use in other parts of the country.

The issue of cost also has implications for transforming the funding mechanism for these programs from "negotiated grants" to a formula type of support over time. While this is explored in more detail in Chapter 9, it should be pointed out here that there was generally a paucity of information on this topic in the professional literature. Since formula funding was proposed at the start of the program, however, participants reviewed a suggestion then under consideration by the Council and Task Force for future use of this mechanism, and its relationship to phasing the program into full State implementation. Under the terms of this proposal, new programs would continue to be funded through a negotiated grant, and would receive substantial technical assistance and monitoring during their first few years. After becoming successfully established, they would be converted to a formula form of support, while technical assistance efforts were recycled into new sites. General receptivity to this suggestion was evidenced in the discussions.

Duplication of Services

An issue that arose early in the life of the program was whether it would duplicate other services, particularly those supported through the fields of health and welfare. The review of the literature in the overall field also reflects strong concern related to problems of coordinating various types of programs providing services to very young children and their families.

In the course of the policy discussions, however, concern on this point was somewhat muted for several apparent reasons. First, the Minnesota legislation requires that the Council and Task Force give priority in funding to programs which demonstrate ability to coordinate services with other agencies. Second, the comparatively low support level of the early childhood and family education programs (i.e., per participant cost) has generally made duplication of other services unaffordable. Third, the composition of the Advisory Task Force, as appointed by the Council on Quality Education, mandatorily includes people knowledgeable about programs in fields other than education.

Nonetheless, participants in the discussions did voice concern that local school districts without prior experience in this kind of programming be prevented from establishing, for example, new facilities for early childhood and family education when these are otherwise available in the community. The Council and Task Force were urged to continue to stringently review proposals in examining coordination with other agencies.

Summary Comments

This chapter has dealt with several areas in which issues have arisen with respect to providing early childhood and family education services in Minnesota. The issues — points of disagreement — were identified through both a review of the literature and in discussions with various groups during the study.

It was pointed out that most issues are concerned mainly with how to provide services, not with whether the services are needed by families. A major area of concern among the issues has to do with identifying which types of agencies should receive funds directly from the State to operate programs. It was noted that this issue remains under debate. However, the Council and Advisory Task Force have taken the position that school districts should continue to be the "prime sponsors" for early childhood and family education funds, but that these agencies should receive strong encouragement to consider providing services by contracting with other agencies.

The matter of which types of families should be eligible to participate in early childhood and family education programs was also discussed. It was pointed out that Minnesota's legislation is somewhat unique. While most efforts elsewhere have focused on low income and/or stressed families, families of all types and incomes are eligible to participate in these pilot programs. Based on that premise, however, concern was identified that programs effectively reach a cross-section of the eligible families. It was suggested that guidelines be developed to assure achievement of that objective.

A further issue receiving consideration here was that of the role of parents as members of local program advisory committees. Note was taken of different objectives for these committees, and it was suggested that guidelines be prepared to assist programs in developing a role for these committees that is suitable to both the community characteristics and the intent of the legislation.

The issue of qualifications of staff for early childhood and family education programs was reviewed in the policy discussions. While there was some debate on this matter, there appeared to be good consensus that persons filling professional positions ought to be appropriately licensed. In addition, however, it was suggested that competencies that are uniquely relevant to these programs should be used both to select professional staff from the pool of licensed persons, and as guidelines in hiring paraprofessional personnel.

The topic of the quality of facilities for early childhood and family education programs, especially those in which child development sessions occur, was examined during the policy discussions. It was noted that declines in school enrollments have not resulted in a surplus of space, but more often in the closing of buildings. Consequently, a shortage of space has been characteristic of many local situations. While there was concern that stringent requirements for facilities might discourage participation in the program, stronger agreement existed for the position that minimum standards should be used.

The unique provision in the Minnesota legislation wherein participation boundaries for local programs are the same as those determining attendance for elementary schools was reviewed. Some problems with this definition of service area were noted, both with respect to changes in these boundaries, and in terms of problems they present for the participation of non-school agencies as providers of services through contracts with school districts. The intent of the legislation in establishing such relatively small areas was also discussed, especially noting this implies a desire for "localism" in the access of services. Generally, there was support for reducing the emphasis on elementary school areas, but in a fashion that discourages extremely large-scale (e.g., city- or region-wide) programs.

Cost is an issue in almost every program, and early childhood and family education is no exception. The increase in information related to the long-range cost benefits of similar programs was reviewed. It was suggested that Minnesota collect similar data with the use of federal or foundation funds. Plans of the Council and Task Force to propose a model for State implementation involving initial funding of programs with "negotiated grants," and conversion of successful programs into formula support received generally favorable discussion by participants at the policy meetings.

A matter of concern since enactment of the original legislation, whether these programs duplicate other services, received consideration. It was noted that the literature in the field reflects concern about mechanisms to coordinate services for very young children and their families. Several features built into the Minnesota legislation and the program which tend to offset this problem were examined. Nonetheless, the Council and Task Force were advised to continue to monitor programs and applications to assure that coordination with other community services is maintained.

SECTION III: COSTS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA

CHAPTER 7: PARTICIPATION BY SERVICE COMPONENTS

Introduction

Service components found in early childhood and family education (ECFE) programs include center-based and home-based parent and family education, center-based child development activities, children's health screening, family resource libraries, and preparenting education for adolescents. Although all 22 programs provide parent education and child development activities in some form, the provision of other service components varies among programs.

Families and their young children are eligible for services offered by the program if the adults are caregivers, expectant parents, or parents of a child aged birth to kindergarten enrollment, and if they live within the elementary school attendance area(s) served by an early childhood and family education program.

Variations among program sites in the manner by which parent and family education has been offered have been considered a matter of local discretion by the Council on Quality Education. In other words, the Council and Advisory Task Force have not taken the position of requiring that a local program serve adults a particular number of times or that a minimum proportion of that population be brought into participation. Instead, local experimentation with different service formats has been encouraged and felt to be consistent with the pilot character of the legislation.

Parent and Family Education

Table 7.1 displays local estimates of the number of adults eligible for services, and actual participation in parent and family activities at the 22 programs in fiscal year 1978. In terms of the eligible population, the total of local estimates for this figure was 14,475 adults in fiscal 1978. The number of adults eligible for a local program ranges from a low of 65 in Littlefork to a high of 1,671 in Minneapolis; across the 22 programs, an average of 658 adults was calculated.

Variations in the estimated numbers of eligible adults are due to factors such as population density, number of elementary attendance areas served, urban/suburban/rural setting, and size of school district. For example, the program in Littlefork/Big Falls served the two elementary attendance areas in a school district at the northern edge of Minnesota. The low number of eligible adults reflects that rural area's extremely low population density. The program in Minneapolis served a large elementary school attendance area in a densely populated urban setting.

Parent and family education provides information on child development and opportunities for parents to share alternative child-rearing styles. All programs offered center-based parent and family education, which included group activities such as formal and informal small group discussions, guest speakers, workshops, field trips, and observation of and participation in learning experiences for children. According to Table 7.1, a total of 2,982 adults attended center-based parent and family education group activities two or more times during fiscal 1978, an average of 136 for each program.

Table 7.1 Adult Participation in Center-based and Home-based Parent and Family Education at 22 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE ADULTS	ATTENDANCE AT CENTER-BASED ACTIVITIES		INVOLVEMENT IN HOME-BASED ACTIVITIES
		2 OR MORE TIMES IN GROUP ACTIVITIES	1 OR MORE TIMES IN INDIV. ACTIVITIES	2 OR MORE TIMES
Aitkin	325	60	25	8
Backus	130	35	79	60
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	360	85	45	(no home-based)
Bloomington - Valley View	400	193	74	(no home-based)
Duluth	165	40	2	37
Fairmont	1,250	85	14	15
Lewiston	479	301	83	62
Littlefork/Big Falls	65	41	0	30
Mankato	722	358	465	46
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	580	183	0	9
Minneapolis - Very Important People	1,671	89	25	123
Mounds View	827	180	0	(no home-based)
Osseo	530	139	0	(no home-based)
Robbinsdale	160	38	6	1
Rochester	1,495	311	244	3
St. Charles	450	161	56	(no home-based)
St. Louis Park	937	151	50	(no home-based)
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	930	25	130	17
St. Paul - Learning Circle	320	170	30	2
So. St. Paul	1,539	198	92	(no home-based)
Staples	740	40	55	108
White Bear Lake	400	99	85	20
TOTAL	14,475	2,982	1,560	541

The range in attendance reported by each program indicates differences in the intensity of experiences offered. For example, Lewiston involved 301, or about 63 percent of its 479 eligible adults in parent education. However, this program's participation pattern involves adults in large group workshops with guest speakers held on a comparatively intermittent schedule. In most other programs, parent education is delivered through small, structured groups which meet throughout the year with a local staff person, most often on a weekly schedule. This tends to reduce the proportion of participating parents. Consequently, St. Louis Park involved about 151 parents or 16 percent of an estimated 937 eligible adults.

Individual activities in center-based parent and family education included conferences with program staff and meetings to discuss referrals to other community agencies on request of the family. Eighteen programs reported a total of 1,560 adults or an average of 87 persons for each of these locations, who participated at least once in individual center-based parent and family education activities. The remaining four programs did not report individual activities because the emphasis in their services was on group experiences.

Fifteen ECFE programs chose to implement home-based parent and family education in fiscal year 1978. As reported on Table 7.1, 541 adults received two or more home visits during the year. Five programs - Backus, Lewiston, Mankato, Minneapolis (VIP) and Staples -- accounted for about 74 percent of this participation. Each of these sites relies heavily on home visits to reach parents who do not have transportation, or who may be reticent about attending center-based activities. Other programs make more

Table 7.2 Adult Participation Patterns;
Total Hours Offered; and
Hours Spent by a Typical Parent
in Any Parent and Family Education at 22 ECFE Programs
Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	INVOLVED IN ANY PARENT AND FAMILY EDUCATION ACTIVITIES		TOTAL HOURS PAR. ED. OFFERED	EST. PART. HRS. OF A TYPICAL PARENT
	2 OR MORE TIMES	10 OR MORE TIMES		
Aitkin	60	22	320	20
Backus	100	30	2,000	60
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	90	36	365	60
Bloomington - Valley View	223	85	2,170	115
Duluth	55	15	240	60
Fairmont	114	52	406	30
Lewiston	324	142	267	51
Littlefork/Big Falls	40	1	359	20
Mankato	404	171	672	30
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	225	112	952	135
Minneapolis - Very Important People	153	88	2,483	74
Mounds View	180	154	1,260	90
Osseo	203	139	244	34
Robbinsdale	36	19	717	123
Rochester	314	217	574	25
St. Charles	56	54	336	30
St. Louis Park	160	63	424	90
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	170	111	1,445	203
St. Paul - Learning Circle	192	156	318	30
So. St. Paul	236	82	695	55
Staples	148	124	1,584	50
White Bear Lake	110	24	460	110
TOTAL	3,593	1,897	18,291	

occasional use of home visits to reach families with special needs, or to provide individualized services to families who also attend center-based activities.

Because all programs adopted the policy that any eligible adult may participate in any parent education activity (including discussion groups, workshops, individual conferences, field trips, home visits) at the respective sites, it is helpful to consider the attendance patterns for all experiences. Table 7.2 shows that 3,593 adults, or 24 percent of the estimated eligible population attended a parent and family education activity at least twice in fiscal year 1978, an average of 163 per program. Data in this table also show that slightly more than half of these 1,897 persons attended 10 or more times.

It is also useful to consider the total number of hours which parent and family education activities were offered at each program during fiscal 1978. Table 7.2 shows that, for all 22 programs, a total of 18,291 hours, or an average of 831 at each site were reported. Since most programs operated approximately 37 weeks, this indicates an average of about 22 hours per week in each program for parent and family education activities. Again, the variation among programs in total hours of parent and family education activities reflects differences in intensity and format of services selected by the local program.

The range in Table 7.2 in the amount of parent and family education among programs shows a low of 240 and a high of 2,483 hours. The median number of hours of parent and family education can be determined by the point above and below which approximately half of the programs are distributed. A median of 517 hours of parent and family education was offered during fiscal year 1978 among the 22 programs. This is a somewhat better indication of the offerings at a typical site.

Local staff were asked to estimate the total number of hours an adult typically spent participating in parent and family education activites. Table 7.2 shows this estimate for the 22 programs during fiscal year 1978. Across the 22 programs, the average estimated involvement for an adult was 64 hours. This translates into about 1.7 hours per week at a location operating 37 weeks during the year. In part, this relects the strong emphasis within the concept of ECFE on involving adults. This degree of parent participation is also not commonly found in other types of early education, such as nursery school or daycare programs.

Child Development Activities

Table 7.3 presents data on the participation of children (aged birth to kindergarten enrollment) in child development activities at the ECFE program sites. For fiscal year 1978, local staff estimates indicate that a total of 14,331 children were eligible for ECFE services, an average of 651 children for each program. This estimate ranged from 102 at Backus to 2,229 in Minneapolis (VIP).

The program in Backus served a small rural district in central Minnesota where the population is spread over a wide area. The VIP program was located in an urban area with a high population density and served a large elementary school attendance area. The same factors contributing to

Table 7.3 Participation of Children by Age Group in Center-based and Home-based Child Development Activities at 22 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN	ATTENDANCE AT CENTER-BASED ACTIVITIES		INVOLVEMENT IN HOME-BASED ACTIVITIES	
		UNDER 3 YEARS OLD	AGE 3 TO KDGTN	UNDER 3 YEARS OLD	AGE 3 TO KDGTN
Aitkin	490	30	42	0	10
Backus	102	28	34	58	0
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	229	32	73	(no home-based)	
Bloomington - Valley View	293	82	146	(no home-based)	
Duluth	450	7	20	16	18
Fairmont	768	41	73	4	11
Lewiston	361	70	141	31	36
Littlefork/Big Falls	225	N/A	30	0	29
Mankato	781	435	137	95	0
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	1,700	108	98	7	0
Minneapolis - Very Important People	2,229	77	54	91	67
Mounds View	675	77	84	(no home-based)	
Osseo	400	25	90	(no home-based)	
Robbinsdale	117	14	11	0	1
Rochester	855	127	169	5	4
St. Charles	378	27	28	(no home-based)	
St. Louis Park	669	59	91	(no home-based)	
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	815	99	118	20	19
St. Paul - Learning Circle	650	24	71	(no home-based)	
So. St. Paul	1,082	113	98	(no home-based)	
Staples	420	31	70	24	38
White Bear Lake	642	45	66	5	15
TOTAL	14,331	1,551	1,744	356	248

variations in the number of eligible adults affected the number of eligible children: population density, number of elementary attendance areas served, urban/suburban/rural setting, and size of school district.

While there were an estimated 14,331 children eligible, it is interesting to note that the estimated number of eligible adults was only 14,475, a ratio of about one adult for each child. While these are estimates, this information suggests that participants include couples with several children under kindergarten enrollment age, as well as single parents with one or more children under age five.

Center-based child development activities are provided in an environment carefully planned to meet the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs of young children. Sessions are usually conducted on a weekly basis and last from one to three hours. Activities are offered for mixed age groups or separately for infants, toddlers, and prekindergarten children, and are typically held along with center-based parent and family education activities. All 22 programs offered center-based child development activities for children aged three to enrollment in kindergarten, while 21 programs served children under three years of age.

As Table 7.3 indicates, a total of 3,295 children attended center-based child development activities in fiscal year 1978. Of these, 1,551 were under age three (an average of 74 per program), and 1,744 aged three to kindergarten enrollment (an average of 79 per program). Low participation at sites such as Duluth (27 children) and St. Charles (55 children), partly reflects the experience of programs during their first year of operation, as their staff worked to achieve familiarity and acceptance in the community and to build participation.

As noted earlier in the discussion on adult participation, these variations in participation also correspond with the differences in the intensity of services offered. For example, Littlefork/Big Falls reported 30 children participating in center-based experiences. This program organized a structured children's group at the beginning of the year and conducted sessions two or three times weekly throughout the year for the same children. By contrast, in Mankato, 572 children participated in sessions at three elementary school sites. Enrollment was changed each quarter to accommodate new families.

Services to young children are also provided through home visits. Home visitors attempt to involve several family members (father, mother, siblings, and extended family members) in the learning process. The visitor works on an individual basis with the family in activities especially designed for the child's level of development. Child development activities in the home-based format were offered by 14 programs in fiscal 1978.

Data in Table 7.3 indicate that a total of 604 children aged birth to kindergarten enrollment were served by home-based activities in 14 ECFE programs. Eleven of the 14 programs made home visits to a total of 356 children under age three, an average of 32 for each program. Home visits were also made to 248 children aged three to kindergarten enrollment by 11 programs, an average of 23 for each program. As these figures indicate, home visits are often used to reach families with very young children who may not be ready to participate in group experiences. In other programs, home visits are made to families in isolated circumstances who may not be able to reach the center-based activities. The five programs which made home visits a major component of their services (Backus, Lewiston, Mankato, Minneapolis-VIP, and Staples) served 73 percent, or 440 of the children involved in home-based experiences.

Local staff were asked to provide attendance data on the number of children involved at least twice, and those involved ten or more times, to indicate the level of intensity of participation in all child development services, both center-based and home-based. According to Table 7.4, a total of 4,043 children, or 28 percent of the estimated number of eligible children, participated two or more times in fiscal year 1978. This is an average of 184 for each program. Program staff reported that 2,164 children attended 10 or more times. This indicates that 54 percent of the children who attended twice or more, actually attended 10 or more times.

Table 7.4 shows that there were 24,986 hours of child development activities offered in fiscal year 1978 by the 22 ECFE programs, an average of 1,136 hours at each location. Again, noting that most programs operated approximately 37 weeks, these data indicate an average of 31 hours per week for child development at each of the locations.

Local staff estimated the amount of time typically spent by a child participating in child development activities during fiscal year 1978. These estimates are shown in Table 7.4. Across all 22 programs, this figure averaged 71 hours. Divided by the typical 37 weeks of services, this suggests that, on the average, a child participated 1.9 hours per week. As might be expected, this figure is close to the

Table 7.4 Children's Participation Patterns; Total Hours Offered; and Hours Spent by a Typical Child in Child Development Activities at 22 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	INVOLVED IN ANY CHILDREN'S SERVICES		TOTAL HOURS CHILD DEVLPT OFFERED	EST. PART. HOURS OF A TYPICAL CHILD
	2 OR MORE TIMES	10 OR MORE TIMES		
Aitkin	72	12	320	15
Backus	97	33	2,000	40
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	115	48	350	50
Bloomington - Valley View	216	108	2,170	105
Duluth	27	20	200	60
Fairmont	257	62	158	30
Lewiston	289	149	299	48
Littlefork/Big Falls	49	29	306	123
Mankato	604	256	672	30
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	241	122	1,008	135
Minneapolis - Very Important People	195	135	2,463	74
Mounds View	169	142	1,260	90
Osseo	140	115	240	32
Robbinsdale	36	36	717	99
Rochester	296	130	408	25
St. Charles	100	61	336	30
St. Louis Park	155	85	386	20
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	217	146	1,495	204
St. Paul - Learning Circle	85	72	540	180
So. St. Paul	214	113	664	55
Staples	369	200	1,584	40
White Bear Lake	100	90	7,410	74
TOTAL	4,043	2,164	24,986	

previously reported estimate of 1.7 hours of weekly parent participation. This is strong indication that the programs emphasize the involvement of parents to the same extent as that of young children.

Children's Health Screening and Referral

Early health screening is a service which eight ECFE programs chose to offer in fiscal year 1978. It is designed to detect any potential learning problems or deterrents to a child's healthy growth and development. With passage of the 1977 statewide screening legislation, the programs have attempted to closely coordinate screening efforts with their local school districts.

As indicated by Table 7.5, 207 children received health screening services. The eight programs provided this service for children younger than those served with the local school district's screening allowance. An average of 26 children participated for each of the eight programs. Following screening, 40, or 19 percent, of the children were referred directly by the ECFE staff for further examination, diagnosis, and/or treatment.

Family Resource Libraries

Resource libraries were established at 22 programs to broaden the scope of information available to families. These services emphasized the free and convenient availability of materials such as durable and developmentally appropriate children's toys, children's books, publications for parents, and other related materials.

Table 7.5 Number of Children who Received Health Screening and Referral Directly through Eight ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING HEALTH SCREENING	NUMBER OF DIRECT REFERRALS FOLLOWING HEALTH SCREENING	PERCENT OF CHILDREN SCREENED WHO WERE REFERRED
Backus	52	26	50%
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	20	0	
Bloomington - Valley View	33	0	
Duluth	15	4	27
Mounds View	42	0	
Robbinsdale	19	3	16
Rochester	1	0	
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	25	7	28
TOTAL	207	40	

Table 7.6 presents information on library use. Local records indicated that 2,625 individual parents (an average of 119 for each program) checked out items once or more during fiscal 1978. Referring to Table 7.2, this indicates that 73 percent of the adults who participated two or more times in any parent education activity may also have checked out library items at least once.

The total of recorded library loans at 22 programs was 27,929, an average of 1,270 per program. In turn, this suggests that an average parent borrowed about 11 items. There was considerable range reported, from a low of 1 loan per parent to a high of 29 loans per parent. Staples, with the lowest rate, uses a structured home-based format which regularly takes developmental activities into the child's home. Consequently, the center-based library is a less-used resource. Lewiston's program also has a home-based component, but conducted structured children's activities at the center. This enhanced the use of the program library by families as they attended these activities. The wide range in loans also reflects variation in participation rates for individual programs and variation in the amount of materials available at each program. Although the lending libraries are not stressed as a major component of ECFE, the use of this service by families makes them a valuable resource in strengthening the parents' role in their child's development.

Preparenting Education for Adolescents

Fifteen of the programs offered preparenting education for adolescents in fiscal year 1978. Generally, the purpose of these experiences is to raise awareness of the responsibilities and rewards of being a parent.

Table 7.6 Use of Lending Libraries in 22 ECFE Programs
Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	NUMBER OF PARENTS CHECKING OUT ITEMS ONCE OR MORE	TOTAL NUMBER RECORDED LOANS	AVERAGE LOANS PER PARENT
Aitkin	62	147	2
Backus	71	1,260	18
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	35	133	4
Bloomington - Valley View	143	2,062	14
Duluth	30	221	7
Fairmont	75	495	7
Lewiston	316	6,958	22
Littlefork/Big Falls	13	374	29
Mankato	350	1,484	4
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	185	2,500	14
Minneapolis - Very Important People	82	509	6
Mounds View	182	2,797	15
Osseo	115	595	5
Robbinsdale	19	152	8
Rochester	314	5,494	17
St. Charles	161	936	6
St. Louis Park	164	289	2
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	106	732	7
St. Paul - Learning Circle	63	52	1
So. St. Paul	85	663	8
Staples	40	51	1
White Bear Lake	14	25	2
TOTAL	2,625	27,929	11

Table 7.7 summarizes participation in preparenting education across the 15 programs.

Nine programs offered workshops or classes in junior and senior high schools in their areas. These sessions served 1,305 adolescents in fiscal 1978, an average of 145 for each program. Similar sessions were offered by eight programs at the center, to a total of 488 teenagers, or an average of 61 for each location.

Senior or junior high school students served as assistants in child development sessions at 14 programs. A total of 382 adolescents, or 27 per program, participated in this type of activity. These child development activities were designed to promote interaction with young children and to provide opportunities for instruction in child development.

A total of 4,784 adolescent service hours were offered by 15 programs. In some programs, adolescents typically attended one to four hours of special sessions. In other programs, more intensive experiences were offered. In these cases, typical students spent from 10 to 50 hours during the year in ECFE sessions. Four programs offered extensive experiences for their adolescent students in classrooms and discussion groups, so their students typically participated from 72 to 520 hours during the year.

Summary Comments

Early childhood and family education programs focus on enhancing the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Programs provide

Table 7.7 Adolescent Participation in Preparenting Education in 15 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	ADOLESCENT PARTICIPATION ONCE OR MORE			NUMBER PARTICIPATING IN ANY PROGRAM SESSION		TOTAL HOURS ADOLESC. SERVS OFFERED	EST. PART. HOURS OF A TYPICAL ADOLESC.
	SESSIONS IN JR/SR HIGH CLASSROOMS	SESSIONS AT THE PROGRAM CENTER	ASSISTANTS IN CHILD DEVLPT. SESSIONS	ONCE OR MORE	10 OR MORE TIMES		
Backus	75	75	0	75	0	10	2
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	275	0	6	281	0	11	1
Bloomington - Valley View	670	64	69	803	69	480	25
Fairmont	14	0	10	24	3	52	10
Lewiston	48	23	2	48	2	18	4
Mankato	0	108	108	108	101	500	24
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	45	33	25	78	10	280	72
Mounds View	0	0	6	6	1	110	80
Osseo	0	0	2	2	2	90	45
Robbinsdale	0	0	3	6	3	1,560	520
St. Louis Park	78	0	50	128	0	256	2
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	25	95	21	141	21	1,056	400
So. St. Paul	0	15	3	35	8	65	24
Staples	75	75	75	135	0	10	15
White Bear Lake	0	0	2	9	1	286	36
Total	1,305	488	382	1,879	221	4,784	

support services for parents, but do not involve the child in intensive enrollment. All 22 ECFE programs offered parent and family education and child development services in fiscal year 1978. Other service components which some programs chose to implement included early health screening, resource libraries, and preparenting education for adolescents, all of which were offered less extensively than the two major components.

During fiscal year 1978, there were an estimated 14,475 adults and 14,331 children eligible for services in the 22 early childhood and family education grant locations. Approximately one-fourth (7,636) of these individuals participated two or more times in parent and family education or child development activities. Most participants attended activities held at the program site (center-based), although several programs served a significant number of participants in home-based experiences. Programs offered an average of 22 hours of parent and family education and 31 hours of child development activities each week. Parents typically attended 1.7 hours per week while typical participation for a child involved about two hours per week. This attendance pattern reflects the strong emphasis on direct family involvement not commonly found in other types of early education programs, such as nursery schools or day care services.

CHAPTER 8: PARTICIPATION AND COST DATA

Introduction

Since the inception of Minnesota's early childhood and family education (ECFE) program in 1974, interest in the cost of services and in the extent and type of participation has been substantial. Use of a funding formula based, for example, on the number of parents or children in a program's service area has been discussed. However, to this point, all CQE monies for operation of a pilot program have been transmitted in a grant negotiated with the local school district.

Increasingly, however, the Council and Task Force have attempted to clarify the relationship between this grant amount, and the extent of a program's service to its clientele. For example, each program has prepared a detailed calendar which shows the number of hours each week that the staff is salaried, and the hours of service available to parents and children. This has been an important source of documentation in the annual negotiation of each grant.

Growing out of this, CQE has collected data relating local costs to actual participation. Specific figures were compiled from questionnaires complet- by local program directors in the Spring of 1977 and Summer of 1978. These data are summarized in this chapter.

Overall Participation Information

Data in Table 8.1 summarize participation of adults and children in the 13 programs funded during fiscal year 1977 and the 22 locations receiving support in fiscal year 1978. For purposes of tabulation, adult participants were defined as parents (or caregivers) who attended any parent and family education activity two or more times during the year. Child participants were identified as those who attended any children's activity two or more times during the year.

As can be seen in the table, the total of participating children and adults was 3,929 in fiscal year 1977, and 7,636 in fiscal year 1978. Respectively for the two fiscal periods, attendance for each program averaged 302 and 347.

For fiscal year 1977, slightly over half of the total participants were children. Table 8.1 shows that for this period 1,776 parents participated, accounting for about 45 percent of the total. Over 2,100 children comprised the remainder of this total. In fiscal year 1978, this pattern continued. For this period, 47 percent of the total was accounted for by 3,593 adults; children comprised the remaining 53 percent with 4,043 participating two or more times.

Average Costs for Each Participant

Data on program expenditures and average costs for each participant for

Table 8.1 Participation of Adults and Children Two or More Times in ECFE Programs Fiscal Years 1977 and 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING TWO OR MORE TIMES					
	FISCAL YEAR 1977[a]			FISCAL YEAR 1978		
	PARENTS	CHILDREN	TOTAL	PARENTS	CHILDREN	TOTAL
Aitkin	N/A	N/A	N/A	60	72	132
Backus	55	75	130	100	97	197
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	N/A	N/A	N/A	90	115	205
Bloomington - Valley View	160	167	327	223	216	439
Duluth	N/A	N/A	N/A	55	27	82
Fairmont	N/A	N/A	N/A	114	257	371
Lewiston	113	154	267	324	289	613
Littlefork/Big Falls	N/A	N/A	N/A	40	49	89
Mankato	158	298	456	404	604	1,008
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	221	303	524	225	241	466
Minneapolis - Very Important People	133	193	326	153	195	348
Mounds View	89	71	160	180	169	349
Osseo	N/A	N/A	N/A	203	140	343
Robbinsdale	46	59	105	36	36	72
Rochester	267	198	465	314	296	610
St. Charles	N/A	N/A	N/A	56	100	156
St. Louis Park	N/A	N/A	N/A	160	155	315
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	135	170	305	170	217	387
St. Paul - Learning Circle	N/A	N/A	N/A	192	85	277
So. St. Paul	257	263	520	236	214	450
Staples	108	165	273	148	369	517
White Bear Lake	34	37	71	110	100	210
TOTAL	1,776	2,153	3,929	3,593	4,043	7,636

[a] Programs which have an N/A notation were not funded for operation in fiscal year 1977.

fiscal years 1977 and 1978 can be reviewed in Tables 8.2 and 8.3 respectively. These costs are broken down with reference to amounts received from CQE and other sources. The latter category includes monies received from: local school district funds and in-kind support; special education support; vocational education programming; CETA; Head Start; and other local sources.

The tables portray the average cost per participant for each of the individual programs and an overall figure for the 13 locations receiving grants in fiscal year 1977 and the 22 funded in fiscal year 1978. In turn, these averages are broken out further to show the amount of funds from CQE and other sources.

For purposes of this overview, the most important information in Tables 8.2 and 8.3 is the cost per participant averaged across all programs. Keeping in mind this is a very approximate indicator of the cost of the program, it can be seen this figure was $169 in fiscal year 1977, and $139 in fiscal year 1978, including funds from all sources. The portion of this average cost per participant emanating from CQE funds was 81 percent in fiscal year 1977, or $137. That share dropped to 65 percent or $91 the following year.

The drop in the overall cost per participant average between the two fiscal years partly reflects increases in participation for the 13 programs receiving grants during both fiscal years. The reduction in both the actual dollars and the proportion of the overall cost accounted for by CQE

Table 8.2 Expenditures from CQE, Other, and Total Funds and Average Cost for Each Participant for 13 ECFE Programs- Fiscal Year 1977

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	EXPENDITURES			AVERAGE COST PER PARTICIPANT		
	CQE FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS[a]	TOTAL FUNDS	CQE FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS
Backus	$34,661	$ 0	$34,661	$267	$ 0	$267
Bloomington - Valley View	48,090	0	48,090	147	0	147
Lewiston	25,047	0	25,047	94	0	94
Mankato	48,414	0	48,414	106	0	106
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	46,765	20,255	67,020	89	39	128
Minneapolis - Very Important People (VIP)	51,628	32,408	84,036	158	100	258
Mounds View	46,123	4,550	50,673	288	29	317
Robbinsdale	20,502	0	20,502	195	0	195
Rochester	44,481	0	44,481	96	0	96
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	67,367	31,349	98,716	221	103	324
So. St. Paul	34,190	22,399	56,589	66	43	109
Staples	37,690	0	37,690	138	0	138
White Bear Lake	34,722	12,320	47,042	489	174	663
AVERAGE	$43,052	$9,483	$50,974	$137	$32	$169
TOTAL	$559,680	$123,281	$662,661	--	--	--

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[a] Additional funding sources include Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school districts, Head Start, and other local agencies.

Table 8.3 Expenditures from CQE, Other and All Funding Sources and Average Cost Per Participant for 22 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	EXPENDITURES			AVERAGE COST PER PARTICIPANT		
	CQE FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	TOTAL[a] FUNDS	CQE FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	TOTAL FUNDS
Aitkin	$22,419	$ 899	$23,318	$170	$ 7	$177
Backus	32,489	5,112	37,601	165	26	191
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	38,079	15,907	53,986	186	77	263
Bloomington - Valley View	40,284	19,345	59,629	92	44	136
Duluth	24,457	2,169	26,626	298	27	325
Fairmont	32,585	11,854	44,439	88	32	120
Lewiston	25,973	6,910	32,883	42	12	54
Littlefork/Big Falls	17,323	5,628	22,951	195	63	258
Mankato	40,209	27,393	67,602	40	27	67
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	43,238	49,846	93,084	93	107	200
Minneapolis - Very Important People	41,335	36,341	77,676	119	104	223
Mounds View	38,409	11,387	49,796	110	33	143
Osseo	7,868	16,384	24,252	23	48	71
Robbinsdale	18,256	6,318	24,574	254	87	341
Rochester	40,014	15,475	55,489	66	25	91
St. Charles	18,808	3,500	22,308	121	22	143
St. Louis Park	34,277	13,093	47,370	109	41	150
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	50,926	37,261	88,187	132	96	228
St. Paul - Learning Circle	31,656	8,150	39,806	114	30	144
So. St. Paul	31,407	37,523	68,930	70	83	153
Staples	34,859	24,100	58,956	67	47	114
White Bear Lake	32,513	9,820	42,333	155	47	202
Average	$31,699	$16,564	$ 48,263	$91	$48	$139
Total	$ 697,384	$ 364,412	$ 1,061,796	--	--	--

[a] Additional funding sources include Vocational Education, Community Education, CETA, Special Education, local school districts, Head Start, and other local agencies.

funds involves a more complicated explanation. In large part, it was caused by a change in the appropriating language which lowered the maximum average grant for fiscal years 1978-79 by stipulating a higher minimum number of programs that must be supported in relation to the overall appropriation, as compared with fiscal year 1977. In turn, this created some pressure for programs to seek increased support from other sources, and that trend can be ascertained in comparing Tables 8.2 and 8.3: the portion of the average cost per participant from non-CQE funds rose from $32 or 19 percent to $48 or 35 percent between fiscal years 1977 and 1978. Another reflection of this is the fact that while over half of the fiscal year 1977 programs received no support from non-CQE sources, all 22 of the fiscal year 1978 grants received funds from other sources.

> It should be noted that more comprehensive data on non-CQE funding sources were collected in fiscal year 1978. In other words, data for the two years are not strictly comparable.

Tables 8.2 and 8.3 also show a range in average per participant costs among the programs for both fiscal years. For fiscal year 1977, this spread was very substantial with a low of $94 per participant at Lewiston, a program making heavy use of short-term enrollments and large group sessions, to a high of $663 at White Bear Lake where the focus was on a small group of primarily low-income children and families.

In fiscal year 1978, this range decreased. Table 8.3 shows that Lewiston again had the lowest average at $54 per participant from all sources, while Robbinsdale recorded the highest cost at $341. The latter program used a service format in which a relatively small number of families were served over a comparatively extended period during the year, as was the case with the three programs with the next highest ranking average cost per participant: Duluth ($325); Bloomington-Cedarcrest ($263); and St. Paul-Dayton's Bluff ($228). In each of these locations, the program had a comparatively "intensive" relationship with participating families.

The data in Tables 8.2 and 8.3 indicate that programs in their first year of operation generally have higher costs per participant. Out of nine programs newly funded in fiscal year 1978, eight had averages above the overall mean for the 22 locations. For the most part, this reflected above normal costs for outreach, comparatively low participation in initial months, and start-up costs such as equipment and materials.

Sparsity of population also appeared to affect program costs. For example, the program at Littlefork/Big Falls served rural families widely dispersed throughout the area. With center-based services focusing on children's developmental activities, this program also had relatively high transportaion costs. Combined with the fact that this was a first-year grant, these factors accounted for an average per participant cost of $258.

Providing services in a home-based format is a factor that can affect a program's average cost per participant. While this form of parent and family education is inherently more expensive since staff work individually with the family, and transportation time and expense are required, the impact of this factor on the program's overall cost per participant depends on how much it is used in relation to other components. Consequently, Mankato was able to attain a very low average cost per participant of $67 for fiscal year 1978, as can be noted in Table 8.3, but provided home-based services to 46 families at least two times as can be seen in Table 7.1 in the preceding chapter. This comprised a very small portion of the program's overall count of 1,008 participating adults and children during that year (Table 8.1).

A program which used a home-based format to serve a larger proportion of its families tended to have a comparatively high average per participant cost. For example, the Very Important People (VIP) program in Minneapolis served over half its families in this manner in fiscal year 1978, as can been seen in Table 7.1, and encountered an average per participant cost of $223, reported in Table 8.3 for that period.

Salary Costs Per Participant Hour

There are many variables which can affect the average cost per participant for a program. The most obvious, however, is simply its overall count of participating adults and children, a factor that can be influenced substantially by the service format which the program can select at its discretion. To compare costs between programs requires an indicator that is not affected by those decisions. A "cost per participant hour" for local salaries has helped clarify these comparisons in the case of certain types of program services: (1) parent and family education in group settings at the local center; (2) home-based parent and family education; and (3) child development group activities conducted at the program site.

For each of these service components, a cost per participant hour average was developed for each of the local programs using the following data: (A) average per hour salary for staff; (B) staff time in direct contact with participants; (C) staff time used to prepare for sessions with participants; (D) the total count of participants; and (E) the average length of each session. These statistics were used in the following equation to derive the salary cost per participant hour: [A x (B + C] / (D x E).

Averages for this indicator in relation to each of the three service components are displayed in Tables 8.4 and 8.5, respectively for fiscal years 1977 and 1978. As might be expected, it is very clear that center-based methods for providing services are considerably less expensive than formats where the family is served in the home. This is true for all center-based activities -- those serving both children and adults.

While a range is evident in the costs for all of these services among the programs, the figures tend to cluster more than the average cost per participant data discussed previously in this chapter. The dispersion that exists, however, is attributable mainly to: (1) variations in salaries paid at the various locations; (2) differences in local effectiveness in gaining participation; and (3) some lack of uniformity among programs with respect to the number of staff assigned to various types of sessions.

Approximate averages were calculated across programs for each of the service components. It should be noted that no attempt was made to weight the figures

Table 8.4 Salary Costs Per Participant-Hour of Three Service Components for 13 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1977[a]

ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	PROGRAM COMPONENT		
	PARENT/FAMILY EDUCATION		CHILD DEVELOPMENT
	CENTER-BASED	HOME-BASED	CENTER-BASED
Backus	$1.38	$10.13	(child care only)
Bloomington - Valley View	2.51	(no home-based)	$2.47
Lewiston	2.19	8.10	2.45
Mankato	4.18	22.56	4.02
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	6.43	(no home-based)	2.41
Minneapolis - Very Important People	2.46	11.54	(no center-based)
Mounds View	3.58	14.70	2.66
Robbinsdale	1.55	(no home-based)	.84
Rochester	2.93	(no home-based)	2.36
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	1.27	(no home-based)	.70
So. St. Paul	3.26	10.67	2.26
Staples	8.58	7.19	1.40
White Bear Lake	No Cost[b]	(no home-based)	2.49
Average[c]	$3.10	$12.13	$2.19
Total programs with this component	13	7	11

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[a] Cost figures compiled in March, 1977.

[b] This program started fiscal year 1977 with monthly group parent education sessions, at which only unpaid speakers made presentations. It offered no home-based services in fiscal 1977. In fiscal 1978, changes were made to provide salaried staff for parent education.

[c] Not weighted for the number of hours of service at the respective sites.

Table 8.5 Salary Costs Per Participant-Hour of Three Service Components for 22 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

	PROGRAM COMPONENT		
	PARENT/FAMILY EDUCATION		CHILD DEVELOPMENT
ECFE PROGRAM LOCATION	CENTER-BASED	HOME-BASED	CENTER-BASED
Aitkin	$10.26	$15.00	$28.89
Backus	5.49	20.83	1.33
Bloomington - Cedarcrest	2.28	(no home-based)	2.11
Bloomington - Valley View	1.32	(no home-based)	1.42
Duluth	2.93	16.00	2.47
Fairmont	11.16	19.15	3.19
Lewiston	1.08	18.66	2.21
Littlefork	1.61	12.47	1.19
Mankato	1.57	10.50	1.24
Minneapolis - Powderhorn Parent Program	3.22	24.53	1.72
Minneapolis - Very Important People	3.62	13.90	1.89
Mounds View	4.93	(no home-based)	3.42
Osseo	1.01	(no home-based)	1.09
Robbinsdale	1.93	(no home-based)	1.57
Rochester	2.00	12.72	1.19
St. Charles	1.96	(no home-based)	26.17
St. Louis Park	5.51	(no home-based)	4.53
St. Paul - Dayton's Bluff	1.74	(no home-based)	2.21
St. Paul - Learning Circle	1.65	(no home-based)	.54
So. St. Paul	1.96	(no home-based)	1.65
Staples	9.42	5.51	1.20
White Bear Lake	1.47	15.50	.71
Average[a]	$3.55	$15.40	$4.18
Total programs with staff costs for this component	22	12	22

[a] Not weighted for the number of hours of service at the respective sites.

in terms of the hours provided at the respective locations. Nonetheless, comparing salary costs per participant hour for center-based parent/family education, Tables 8.4 and 8.5 show that this figure averaged $3.10 in fiscal year 1977, increasing to $3.55 in fiscal year 1978. For the latter period, however, nine programs were in their first year of funding. Two of these, Aitkin and Fairmont, had exceptionally high costs for this service at $10.26 and $11.16, respectively. The third highest cost program with respect to this service was Staples, a location that deemphasized center-based activities as a change in format between the two years.

Deleting these three locations from the computation of an approximate average for center-based parent/family education in fiscal year 1978 yields a lower average salary per participant hour of $2.49. For the 22 sites, the median cost is slightly less at $1.98. Costs in this range can be considered somewhat more typical for this indicator.

Tables 8.4 and 8.5 also present data for center-based child development group activities. On initial examination, the average for these costs appears to have increased substantially between fiscal years 1977 and 1978, for which averages of $2.19 and $4.18 are shown. Again, however, the fiscal 1978 average is strongly affected by exceptionally high costs for this service at the Aitkin and St. Charles programs, both of which were in their first year of operation at this time. When the respective costs for those locations are deleted from computation of the average, it drops to $1.84 for the remaining 20 programs, a slight decrease from the $2.19

shown in Table 8.4. For all 22 sites, the fiscal year 1978 median is $1.69. Again, this may be considered a more typical cost level for the salary expenses per participant hour in center-based child development activities.

Tables 8.4 and 8.5 show salary costs per participant hour in home-based parent/family education rose from $12.13 in fiscal year 1977 to $15.40 in fiscal year 1978. This rise in cost is partly attributable to the increased number of programs using this component on an occasional basis to supplement center-based activities. Additionally, since home-based services are provided on an individual basis, the participant-hour cost for this component is particularly sensitve to salary increases. During each period there is a substantial range among programs. For both fiscal years, Staples has been able to operate the least expensive delivery of this service with costs of $7.19 and $5.51, respectively. The most expensive implementations of home-based parent/family education were Mankato in fiscal year 1977 with a cost of $22.56, and the Powderhorn Parent Project in Minneapolis with a fiscal 1978 cost of $24.53.

Median costs for home-based parent/family education are somewhat different than the averages reported in Tables 8.4 and 8.5 for this service component. In fiscal year 1977, about half of the seven programs offering this format were above and below the median cost of $11.10 per participant hour; the following year, the midpoint in the distribution of these cost levels among the 12 programs providing this component, is substantially higher at $15.25.

Other Program Costs

A summary of certain other estimated expenditures for the 22 local programs receiving funds during fiscal year 1978 is presented in Table 8.6. Taking into account funds from CQE and other sources, total expenditures for the 22 sites exceeded $1 million. As expected, this table shows that most spending was directed at serving the clientele. "Child Development" and "Parent and Family Education" jointly accounted for $764,120, or about 72 percent of the programs' costs. Emphasis between these two areas was approximately equal with proportions of, respectively, 37 and 35 percent.

Table 8.6 also indicates that expenditures to provide preparenting education to adolescents were minimal. According to local estimates, funds allocated to this activity accounted for less than one percent of the total spending.

Costs for local administration of the respective programs were relatively high at $212,132, or about 20 percent of the total. In part, this reflecss the fact that nine of the locations were in their first year of operation during this fiscal year.

Outreach and dissemination costs within the local community accounted for $66,640, or about six percent of the 22 programs' total expenditures, as can be seen in Table 8.6. White it is difficult to establish an appropriate spending level in this area, experience with these programs over the piloting period suggests that this a critical category of expenditure for both initiating and sustaining programs.

As a final item, Table 8.6 shows that approximately $6,248, less than one

Table 8.6 Expenditures by Six Service Categories of 22 ECFE Programs Fiscal Year 1978

EXPENDITURE CATEGORY	ESTIMATED TOTAL EXPENDITURES	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES
Child Development	$392,766	36.9 %
Parent and Family Education	371,354	34.9
Local Administration	212,132	19.9
Outreach and Dissemination	66,640	6.3
Preparenting Education	12,656	1.2
In-service Costs	6,248	.6
TOTAL	$1,061,796	___[a]

[a] Averages do not total 100 percent due to rounding.

percent of the overall expenditure, was allocated to in-service education for local staff. These funds were expended partly in meetings and workshops attended by local program staff. Those occasions provided critical opportunities for sharing ideas, as well as gaining new insights into operation of the concept of early childhood and family education. In-service funds also paid expenses for new program staff to visit sites of established programs.

Summary Comments

This chapter has reported summary data identifying overall cost averages, relative expenses for various types of services offered by the programs, and a breakdown of general cost categories across the pilot sites. In terms of State-level interest, an overall cost per participant of $139, including CQE funds and support from other sources, was identified for fiscal year 1978. While this figure is a very approximate indicator, it helps establish the relatively low cost of these services. It can be noted, for example, that comparable figures for annual costs per child for full-time daycare, nursery school, or Head Start enrollments occasionally exceed $2,000.

There is, of course, an important difference in the number of hours of contact between early childhood and family education programs and these other efforts. This results from the fact that ECFE has been designed with a focus on enhancing the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. The program does not aspire to a service format involving full-time contact with children.

Data displayed in tabular form in the chapter also showed important differences among programs with respect to their average cost per participant. Consequently, an alternate indicator showing salary costs per participant hour for three types of service components was identified. While a range was also reflected between programs in these figures, the following median costs for this indicator were suggested as typical: for center-based parent/family education -- $1.98 per participant hour; for home-based parent/family education -- $15.25 per participant hour; and for center-based child development group activities -- $1.69 per participant hour.

It should be noted that the continued aggregation of these data is critical. Early childhood and family education is a unique concept that has received a substantial pilot implementation in Minnesota, but not elsewhere. Consequently, the increase in this base of information will potentially be of considerable use both in Minnesota and in other states.

CHAPTER 9: FINANCING AND ADMINISTERING EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION

Introduction

The Council on Quality Education (CQE) and its Advisory Task Force on early childhood and family education (ECFE) have piloted the concept involved with this program for more than four years. Both groups have recommended that the State implement early childhood and family education throughout Minnesota. This recommendation also stipulates that this State-wide installation be accomplished gradually in phases. Application for funding would remain a matter of local discretion to insure a continued high level of quality in the services that are provided. Since the inception of the pilot legislation in 1974, there has been interest in the cost of full implementation. Concurrently, there has been continuing interest in developing a formula to serve as a basis for determining local funding needs. This chapter overviews these considerations, and suggests a process to accomplish State-wide implementation of ECFE.

Funding Programs with Negotiated Grants

Background and Administration To Date

Appropriate to the pilot character of the existing legislation, early childhood and family education funds have been allocated to school districts by reviewing proposals for grants. At the point the legislation was enacted, and at later dates when the appropriation was increased, the Council and Task Force distributed notices of the opportunity to apply for these funds to all school districts and numerous other agencies. A full packet of application materials was distributed on request. In some cases, proposals were authored by persons affiliated with non-school agencies, but each request had to be signed by a local school district.

Members of the Council, Task Force, and staff read all proposals, and interviewed the author of each proposal selected for final consideration. Those requests judged to have the best chances for success, and which helped meet the requirement in statute that programs be as equally distributed as possible among urban, suburban, and out-state areas were recommended for funding to the State Board of Education.

Following this initial approval, costs for starting and operating the program were reviewed in a meeting of local personnel and CQE staff to negotiate a final budget for the year.

All programs have applied annually for a continuation grant. This provided an opportunity to update information about the operation of the program, and to identify changes in its direction or scope of services for review by the Council and Task Force. After approval (one program's continuation proposal was disapproved), each grant was individually negotiated.

Factors Influencing Grants

Grant amounts have reflected several factors. First, the legislation has always specified an appropriation and a minimum number of programs. Consequently, an average maximum grant has always existed. In fiscal year 1975, six programs were stipulated for funding with an appropriation for grants that totalled $230,000, an average of $38,000 for each location. For fiscal year 1978, the Council and Task Force were required to fund a minimum of 22 sites with $777,000, an average of $35,000 for each program.

A second factor which affected grant amounts was the limitation in law that a program serve only families residing in the attendance area of a single elementary school. In other words, grant amounts could not be enormously unbalanced by making a single large grant to serve a wide region. While the legislation was subsequently amended to allow the Council and Task Force to approve an application serving more than one elementary area, the emphasis on localizing services for a program remained intact.

The third, and most important, factor which affected grant amounts resulted from a requirement in an early, unenacted version of the ECFE legislation that school districts receive funds at one-tenth of the foundation aid formula's "Per-Pupil-Unit" (P.P.U.) allocation. In other words, if the foundation aid level was about $1,000 per weighted pupil unit, a program would receive $100 for each child in its program. This initial suggestion has been a continuing point of reference for the Council and Task Force as they reviewed proposals and program cost data.

Grant Process Advantages

The mechanism of a negotiated grant has been uniquely appropriate to this program. Although the one-tenth of a pupil unit allocation had been suggested, early childhood and family education programs in this form had not been piloted before, and there was a lack of information about appropriate costs. The flexibility of negotiating the grant amount provided a good chance to gain experience with the costs of different service formats.

Along with the pilot nature of the legislation and the involvement of the Council and Task Force, the negotiated grant also implied monitoring, study, and development of the programs. Members of the Council and Task Force, and CQE staff observed local operations, talked with parents, attended program advisory committee meetings, and conducted in-service training and orientation meetings for local staff persons. As the chapter which summarized evaluation findings noted, programs changed and the concept was clarified through this process.

Using Grants for Start-Up Assistance

As the Council and Advisory Task Force worked with this program, a critical understanding emerged: the concept of early childhood and family education as implemented in Minnesota is unique. Consequently, members of the Council and Task Force feel that initiation of new programs should continue to use a negotiated grant, and that these programs should receive ample technical assistance. Reasons for this position include:

1. Costs and other needs related to the first few years of program services can vary considerably depending on the community and types of families it serves.
2. There is a possibility of misimplementing the basic principle of the early childhood and family education program: enhancing the development of the young child by focusing on the parent. Lack of familiarity with the program has resulted in attempts to use these funds for other purposes (e.g., providing only child care with no parent involvement, confining services to "target" families).
3. Building participation in the program and developing its credibility in the local community is a demanding task. Outreach and communication must be sensitive to

misunderstanding about the purposes of the program. Participation is voluntary; if not properly informed, family members will not attend or will withdraw. Since the program is intended to serve families without regard to income, various methods of outreach may have to be use for various groups (e.g., low income persons, single parents, minority families).

4. Parent education efforts must be highly sensitive to the needs of the particular setting. Overly prescriptive attitudes by professional staff, lack of input from participants, use of content biased toward mothers rather than parents, and similar difficulties can arise.

5. Programs require especially competent administration and direction in their beginning stages. Elementary and secondary school staff, and the local school board need to be oriented to the overall concept. Duplication of services provided by other agencies in the community needs to be reviewed. Some programs may contract with non-school agencies to provide all or a portion of the program; these arrangements require administrative resourcefulness and patience, but can become highly successful forms of cooperation.

6. Securing optimum facilities for the local program is critical. Despite the general decline in elementary and secondary enrollments, adequate housing for a new program can be a problem. Unused school facilities are often closed, not reallocated. This creates space pressures in the remaining buildings which comprise a major obstacle to starting a new program. Good facilities for parent education and child development sessions present a new need in many districts, and technical assistance may be necessary.

7. Competent and committed staff are necessary for implementing early childhood and family education. In-service education and orientation, along with opportunities to share experiences with staff from other locations , are crucial.

Considerations Related to Formula Support

As a corollary point to the suggestion that new programs should receive funds through a negotiated grant, the Council and Task Force also recommend that established locations be converted to formula support. When a program has secured the confidence of the community and developed a strong implementation of early childhood and family education, it can operate successfully without substantial State monitoring.

The Council and Task Force suggest, in other words, that further State implementation should involve a process where local programs receive fiscal and technical support through a negotiated grant during their first years of operation. When they are strongly established, their support should be transferred to a formula type of funding.

The development of an appropriate formula presents certain technical problems. As noted previously, it was initially suggested that school districts receive one-tenth of the per pupil unit allocation within the State foundation aid. It was also noted, however, that the term "pupil" is not precise for this program; the appropriate term is "participant."

A second complexity stems from the fact that parents (and children) participate voluntarily. How much they participate depends on their preferences and the format the local program selects. They may attend a few weeks or the entire year.

A third factor related to establishing a formula for funding is the use of a service format in which parent and family education is provided in the home. As noted in Chapter 8, these "home-based" and individualized forms of serving families are more expensive than providing group sessions at the program's center.

In certain communities, however, the local staff has found this format to be the only way of providing services to many families.

A fourth consideration is that local program costs do not have a linear relationship with the number of participating children and parents. Experience with the pilot programs shows that there is a basic cost that exists regardless of the number of participants.

A fifth factor involved with identifying a formula is support received from other funding sources. As data in the preceding chapters show, CQE grant funds accounted for about 65 percent of the total of local expenditures across the 22 programs. However, this proportion ranged from 46-96 percent among individual programs. Moreover, the availability of other funds may not continue to increase as the number of early childhood and family education programs grows.

A sixth complexity in formula development is that the legislation permits a local program to charge fees to parents who can afford to pay.

The Council on Quality Education and the Advisory Task Force have proposed that inclusion of formula in statute not occur during the fiscal 1980-81 biennium. Instead, it is suggested that this period be used to experiment with one or more versions of a formula to fund the most experienced and successful existing programs. It is anticipated that the further experience gained then will produce an aid formula that would successfully support early childhood and family education programs as they are installed in other areas of the State.

Costs for ECFE and the School Foundation Aid Formula

As pointed out previously, one way of developing an aid formula for early childhood and family education is to allocate a percentage of the State's foundation aid for schools. Table 9.1 shows the foundation aid enacted for fiscal years 1977-79, and projected through fiscal year 1981.

Table 9.1

Minnesota School Foundation Aid
Fiscal Years 1977-1981

School Year	Foundation Aid Per Pupil Unit[a]
1976-77	$ 960
1977-78	1,030
1978-79	1,095
1979-80	1,155
1980-81	1,220

[a] The "Pupil Unit" is a weighted count of pupils used to determine state aid to school districts. The *average daily membership is weighted .5 for kindergarten students, 1.0 for elementary students, and 1.4 for secondary students.*

Chapter 8 presented other data showing the average cost per *participant* across the early childhood and family education programs for fiscal years 1977 and 1978 (Tables 8.2 and 8.3). Tables 9.2 and 9.3 show these figures as a percentage of the foundation aid for the respective years.

Table 9.2

Average Cost of ECFE Per Participant as a Percentage of the School Foundation Per Pupil Unit Aid Fiscal Year 1977

GROUP	NUMBER PARTICIPATING	AVERAGE COST PER PARTICIPANT		PERCENT OF FISCAL 1977 FOUNDATION AID LEVEL[a]	
		CQE FUNDS ONLY	TOTAL FUNDS	CQE FUNDS ONLY	TOTAL FUNDS
Adults	1,776	$304	$373	32%	39%
Children	2,153	251	308	26	32
Total	3,929	ave. $137	ave. $169	ave. 14%	ave. 18%

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[a] The foundation aid level for fiscal year 1977 was $960.

Table 9.3

Average Cost of ECFE Participant as a Percentage of the School Foundation Aid Per Pupil Unit Fiscal Year 1978

GROUP	NUMBER PARTICIPANTING	AVERAGE COST PER PARTICIPANT		PERCENT OF FISCAL 1978 FOUNDATION AID LEVEL[a]	
		CQE FUNDS ONLY	TOTAL FUNDS	CQE FUNDS ONLY	TOTAL FUNDS
Adults	3,593	$192	$296	19%	29%
Children	4,043	172	263	17	26
Total	7,636	ave. $91	ave. $139	ave. 9%	ave. 13%

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[a] The foundation aid level for fiscal year 1978 was $1,030.

These tables also subdivide overall ECFE costs to show similar proportions considering only CQE funds, and component costs and proportions in separate figures for children and adults.

The cost per participant from all sources of funding was $169 in fiscal year 1977, or 18 percent of the foundation aid level that year. In fiscal year 1978, both the cost and its percentage of the foundation aid level declined to an average of $139 from all sources, or 13 percent of the per-pupil-unit allocation.

While this decline represented improved participation and local programs' effectiveness to some extent, it may have been affected more significantly by the amendments to the Legislation passed in the 1977 session. What resulted was an increase in both the appropriation and the required minimum number of programs for fiscal years 1978 and 1979. However, the average amount available for each site dropped.

Tables 9.2 and 9.3 also indicate that costs per adult participant from all sources were $373 in fiscal 1977, or 39 per cent of the foundation aid level. The following year, corresponding figures were $296 and 29 percent.

Again, considering all sources, costs per participating child averaged $308 in fiscal year 1977, dropping to $263 in fiscal 1978. For these two periods, the respective proportions were 32 and 26 percent levels of the foundation aid allocation.

Additional data in these tables show average costs per participant for adults, children, and all individuals from only CQE grant funds. For all participants, these amounts equalled 14 percent of the foundation aid allocations for fiscal year 1977, and 9 percent for fiscal year 1978. For adults, these proportions are 32 and 19 percent, respectively for fiscal years 1977 and 1978; for children, comparable figures are 26 and 17 percent.

Costs for Statewide Implementation

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Council on Quality Education and the Advisory Task Force recommend that early childhood and family education be implemented throughout Minnesota. This recommendation also stipulates that full implementation be phased in gradually and that application by local school districts continue to be voluntary.

For the fiscal 1980-81 biennium, the Council and Task Force have recommended increasing the number of ECFE sites from 22 to 40. Expansion in subsequent years may proceed more quickly as a result of the growing familiarity with the concept that these additional programs will bring.

Despite this recommended gradual implementation, it is informative to project current costs for ECFE at the Statewide level. Population projections for children ages birth to five for calendar years 1979 and 1980 were made using information provided by the Minnesota Center for Health Statistics and the Minnesota Office of the State Demographer. Table 9.4 reports the estimated cost of ECFE for all children ages birth to five years in 1979 and 1980 based on average per participant spending of $139, the amount reported across the 22 CQE pilot sites in fiscal year 1978.

Table 9.4

Estimated Costs for Early Childhood and Family Education for All Eligible Children Ages 0-5 and Their Parents, 1979 and 1980

GROUP	CALENDAR YEAR	
	1979	1980
Estimated Number of Children Ages 0-5	350,021	359,768
Estimated Number of Adults[a]	353,521	363,368
Estimate Total Eligible Participants	703,542	723,134
Estimated Costs[b]	$97,792,338	$100,515,626

[a] Based on 1.01 eligible adults per eligible child in fiscal year 1978.

[b] Based on costs of $139 per participant in fiscal year 1978.

For 1979, the estimated population of children ages birth to five is 305,021. The number of adults related as parents or caregivers (based on the ratio of 1.01 adults per child eligible to participate in fiscal year 1978, as identified in Chapter 7) is an estimated 353,521. The projected total of all eligible participants for 1979 is 703,542. Using the average costs of $139 for each participant in fiscal year 1978 would yield state-wide implementation expenses of $97.8 million. Table 9.4 also shows comparable figures for calendar year 1980. With an estimate of approximately 723,000 eligible participants then, the overall cost would slightly exceed $100 million.

Finally, it should be noted that these are unrefined estimates. They do not reflect, for example, the added expense of inflation and the availability of funds from other sources.

Finally, the projection is based on an estimate of the entire eligible population. However, *experience to date indicates that about one-fourth of those eligible actually participate. In other words, a more realistic estimate of the cost of providing ECFE in all areas would be closer to $25-30 million.*

Experimenting with Alternate Formulas

By fiscal year 1980, five programs will start their sixth year of operation. An additional five programs will begin their fifth year. It is anticipated that various formula alternatives would be used at these (and possibly other) sites to allocate funds. Moreover, the Council and Task Force would utilize expert assistance to compile data from this experience and prepare a recommendation for the 1981 Legislative Session suggesting a formula for financing proven early childhood and family education programs in subsequent years. Options to be explored would include:

1. Allocating funds based on the average cost per participant from all sources the preceding year, with adjustments made for inflation and for changes in the availability of non-CQE funds.
2. Allocating a flat award for basic program costs regardless of the number of participants and providing an additional set amount for each participant.
3. Allocating funds based on the count of "participant-hours" from the preceding year.

4. Allocating funds based on the number of participants times a percentage of the foundation aid allocation.

Further analysis of historical data on the costs of programs through the current year will yield additional options and variations. For example, regression techniques can be used to identify "latent" formulas across the grants that have been negotiated.

Summary Comments

A critical issue that will be faced in development of a final formula will be its constraints on local programs. For example, a formula which differentiates only on the number of participants may encourage a "revolving door" service format. Such a formula could represent a silent State policy which removes the discretion that programs have in terms of deciding how much participation a family may obtain. As programs try to increase their numbers, the impact on parents and children could be reduced. If for no other reason, this can accrue simply from a growing impersonality in the format. This may also tend to encourage the addition of other elementary attendance areas within their service boundaries, to neglect participants who are difficult to recruit, and, finally, to penalize programs in sparsely populated areas. A mechanism with potential for offsetting these implications is that of allocating funds based on the number of "participant hours" (i.e., a count of the number of hours the program serves people times the total number of participating adults and children). Whether the entire formula can be based on this number, or whether its use as a partial factor in allocating funds is feasible, should be investigated.

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SECTION V: APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Laws of Minnesota, 1977: Chapter 447, Article VIII

3.9271 (EARLY CHILDHOOD IDENTIFICATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS.) Subdivision 1. For the 1977-78 and 1978-79 school years, the council on quality education shall make grants to no fewer than 22 pilot early childhood and family education programs. Early childhood and family education programs are programs for children before kindergarten and below age six which may include the following: identification of potential barriers to learning, education of parents on child development, libraries of educational materials, family services, education for parenthood programs in secondary schools, in-center activity, home-based programs, and referral services.

Notwithstanding section 3.926, subdivision 2, every early childhood and family education program proposal shall be submitted to the council on quality education not less than six weeks before the planned commencement of the program. These programs or grants shall be as equally distributed as possible among districts in cities of the first class, in suburbs, and outside the seven county metropolitan area. No more than two of these programs shall receive these grants in any one school district. Each pilot program shall serve one elementary school attendance area in the local school district or a combination of attendance areas if deemed appropriate by the council.

The council on quality education shall prescribe the form and manner of application and shall determine the participating pilot programs. In the determination of pilot programs, programs shall be given preference for their ability to coordinate their services with existing programs and other governmental agencies. The council on quality education shall report on the programs annually to the committees on education of the senate and house of representatives.

Subd. 2. Each district providing pilot programs shall establish and maintain an account separate from all other district accounts for the receipt and disbursement of all funds related to these early childhood and family education programs.

Subd. 3. A school district providing early childhood and family education programs shall be eligible to receive funds for these programs from other government agencies and from private sources when such funds are available.

Subd. 4. A district may charge reasonable fees for early childhood and family education services; however, a district shall waive the charge or fee if any pupil, his parent or guardian is unable to pay it.

3.9272 (ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAMS.) The council on quality education shall appoint an advisory task force on early childhood and family education programs. The advisory task force shall be composed of parents of young children and persons knowledgeable in the fields of health, education and welfare. A majority of the task force shall be parents of young children. The advisory task force shall advise the council in the administration of the early childhood and family education programs. The terms, compensation and removal of members shall be governed by the provisions of section 15.059, subdivision 6. The task force shall expire June 30, 1979.

3.9273 (STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION; DUTIES.) The state board of education shall provide service to the pilot programs by:

(1) Applying for funds which are, or may become, available under federal programs pertaining to child development, including funds for

administration, demonstration projects, training, technical assistance, planning, and evaluation;

(2) Making maximum use of existing information services to inform the public concerning comprehensive early childhood development;

(3) Providing professional and technical assistance.

3.9274 (ADVISORY COMMITTEES.) Each pilot program shall provide for an advisory committee selected from the attendance area by the local board of education. A majority of the members of this committee shall report to the council on quality education, the local school board, and the district community school advisory council if this council has been established in the district.

3.9275 (VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION.) All participation by parents and children in these early childhood and family education programs shall be voluntary, and shall not preclude participation in any other state or local program. All programs shall provide services to all qualified children, regardless of race, religion or ethnic background, and no such programs shall be used in whole or in part for religious worship or instruction.

The council on quality education and the advisory task force on early childhood and family education programs shall conduct a study of policy issues involved in the provision of early childhood and family education and shall submit a final report on the study to the legislature no later than January 15, 1979.

APPENDIX B: STATE-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES RELATED TO EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY EDUCATION

1. Better Education Legislative Liaison
2. Minnesota Association for Childhood Education International
3. Minnesota Association for Children with Learning Disabilities
4. Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children
5. Minnesota Children's Lobby
6. Minnesota Education Association
7. Minnesota Federation of Teachers
8. Minnesota Head Start Directors Association
9. Minnesota Parent-Teacher-Student Association
10. Minnesota Early Childhood Teacher Educators
11. Interagency Committee on Young Children and Their Families
12. Governor's Task Force on Families
13. Minnesota Board of Teaching
14. Minnesota Child Care and Development Advisory Council
15. Interagency Advisory Committee on Child Health Screening
16. Minnesota Family Study Center
17. Minnesota Council on Family Relations
18. Day Care Licensing, Department of Public Welfare
19. American Montessori Society
20. Minnesota Council on Exceptional Children
21. Minnesota Kindergarten Association

APPENDIX C: LIST OF SUPPORTING REPORTS

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The above documents are available on request from: Minnesota Council on Quality Education, 722 Capitol Square Building, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 (612/296-5072).